4402

Husbandry Spiritualized:

OR,

The HEAVENLY USE OF Earthly Things.

Conſiſting of many Pleaſant OBSERVATIONS, Pertinent APPLICATIONS, and ſerious REFLECTIONS, and each Chapter concluded with a Divine and ſuitable POEM.

Directing HUSBAND-MEN to the moſt Excellent Improvements of their common Imployments.

Whereunto are added, by way of Appendix, ſeveral choice OCCASIONAL MEDITATIONS, upon Birds, Beaſts, Trees, Flowers, Rivers, and ſeveral other Objects; fitted for the help of ſuch as deſire to walk with God in all their Solitudes and Receſſes from the World.

Hoſ. 12. v. 10. *I have uſed Similitudes by the Miniſtry of the Prophets.*
Gen. 24 v. 63. *And* Iſaac *went out to meditate in the Fields.*

Experto crede, aliquid amplius invenires in ſylvis, quam in angulis; ligna & lapides docebunt te quod à Magiſtris audire non poſſis. Bernard.

Simul & jucunda, & idonea dicere vitæ.
Lectorem delectando, pariterque monendo. Horace.

By JOHN FLAVELL Miniſter of the Goſpel in *Devon.*

THE THIRD EDITION.

London, Printed and are to be ſold by *Robert Boulter*, at the *Turks-Head*, over againſt the Royal Exchange in *Cornhil*, MDCLXXIV.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

Epiſtle Dedicatory.

To the Worſhipful *Robert Savery*, and *William Savery*, of *Slade*, Eſquires.

Honoured Friends,

IT *hath been long ſince obſerv'd, That the world below, is a Glaſs to diſcover the World above*; Seculum eſt ſpeculum. *And although I am not of their opinion, that ſay, The Heathens may* ſpell *Chriſt out of the Sun, Moon and Stars*; *yet this I know, That the irratoinal and inanimate, as well as rational creatures have a Language*; *and though not by* Articulate *ſpeech*, *yet in a* Metaphorical *ſenſe, they preach unto man the wiſdom, Power, and goodneſs of* God, Rom. 1. 20. *There is* (*ſaith the* Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 19. 3.) No ſpeech,

nor Language where their voice is not heard. *Or* (*as* Junius *renders*) *there is no Speech, nor Words, yet without theſe their voice is underſtood*; *and their Line* (*i. e. ſaith* Deodate) *their writing in groſs and plain draughts, is gone out through all the earth.*

As man is compounded of a fleſhly and ſpiritual ſubſtance, ſo God hath endowed the creatures with a ſpiritual, as well as fleſhly uſefulneſs; they have not only a natural uſe in Alimental and Phyſical reſpects, but alſo a ſpiritual uſe, as they bear the figures and ſimilitudes of many ſublime and heavenly myſteries. Believe me (*ſaith contemplative* Bernard) *thou ſhalt find more in the Woods, than in a corner; Stones and Trees will teach thee what thou ſhalt not hear from learned Doctors. By a skilful and induſtrious improvement of the creatures* (*ſaith Mr.* Baxter *excellently*) *we might have a fuller taſte of Chriſt and Heaven, in every bit of Bread that we eat, and in every draught of Beer that we drink, than moſt men have in the uſe of the Sacrament.*

And as the Creatures teach divine and excellent things, ſo they teach them in a perſpicuous and taking manner: Duo illa nos maximè

maximè movent ſimilitudo, & exemplum, *ſaith the* Orator; *Theſe two things, ſimilitude and example, do eſpecially move us. Notions are more eaſily conveyed to the underſtanding, by being firſt cloathed in ſome apt Similitude, and ſo repreſented to the ſenſe. And therefore Jeſus Chriſt the great Prophet, delighted much in teaching by Parables; and the Prophets were much in this way alſo,* Hoſ. 12.10. I have uſed Similitudes by the Miniſtry of the Prophets. *Thoſe that can retain little of a Sermon, yet ordinarily retain an apt Similitude.* Cicero.

I confeſs it is an humbling conſideration, That man, who at firſt was led by the knowledge of God to the knowledge of the Creature, muſt now by the Creatures learn to know God. That the Creatures (as one ſaith) like Balaams *Aſs, ſhould teach their Maſter. But though this be the unhappineſs of poor man in his collapſed ſtate, yet it is now his wiſdom to improve ſuch Helps; and whilſt others by the abuſe of Creatures, are furthering their Perdition, to be by the ſpiritual improvement of them, promoting our own Salvation.*

It's an excellent Art to diſcourſe with Birds, Beaſts and Fiſhes, about ſublime and ſpiritual Subjects,

Subjects, and make them anſwer to our Queſtions; yet this may be done, Job 12. 7, 8. Ask now the beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee, and the Fowls of the Air, and they ſhall tell thee; or ſpeak to the Earth, and it ſhall teach thee, and the Fiſhes of the Sea ſhall declare unto thee. *That is (ſaith neat and accurate* Caryl) *the creatures teach us when we think of them;* "*They teach us, though not formally,* "*yet vertually; the anſwer and reſolve the* "*queſtion put to them, though not explicitely* "*to the ear, yet convincingly to the conſcience.* "*So then, we ask the creatures, when we dili-* "*gently conſider them, when we ſearch out the* "*perfections and virtues that God hath put in-* "*to or ſtampt upon them. To ſet our mind thus* "*upon the creature, is to diſcourſe with the* "*creature; the queſtions which man ask of* "*a beaſt, are only his own Meditations. A-* "*gain, the creatures teach us, when we in Me-* "*ditation make out collections, and draw* "*down a demonſtration of the Power, Wiſdom,* "*and Goodneſs of God in making them, or of* "*the frailty of man in needing them; Such* "*Concluſions and Inferences, are the teachings* "*of the creatures.*

Caryl in loc.

Common

Common objects (ſaith another) may be improved two wayes; viz. *In an argumentative, and in a Repreſentative way; by reaſoning from them, and by viewing the reſemblance that is betwixt them and ſpiritual matters.* Mr. Manton.

Firſt, In Meditation argue thus, as in the preſent caſe and Similitude of the Apoſtle. If an Husbandman upon the ordinary principles of reaſon can wait for the Harveſt, ſhall not I wait for the Coming of the Lord? The day of Refreſhing; the Corn is precious to him, and ſo is the coming of Chriſt to me. Shall he be ſo patient, and endure ſo much for a little Corn? and not I for the Kingdom of Heaven? He is willing to ſtay till all cauſes have had their operations, till he hath received the former and the latter rain, and ſhall not I, till the divine decrees be accompliſhed? 1.

Secondly, in Meditation, make the reſemblance and diſcourſe thus within your ſelves: This is my Seed-time, Heaven is my Harveſt; here I muſt labour and toyl, and there reſt. I ſee the Husbandmans life is a great toyl; no excellent thing can be obtained without labour, and an obſtinate patience. I ſee the Seed muſt be hidden in the furrows, rotten and corrupted, ere 2.

ere it can bring forth with any increase. Our hopes are hidden, light is sown for the righteous; all our comforts are buried under the clods, and after all this there must be long waiting, we cannot sow and reap in a day; effects cannot follow, till all necessary causes have first wrought. Tis not in the power of Husbandmen to ripen fruits at pleasure, our times are in the hands of God, therefore 'tis good to wait; a long-suffering patience will reap the desired fruit. Thus you have some hints of this heavenly Art of improving the Creatures.

Navigation Spiritualized.

The Motives inducing me to this undertakement, was the Lords owning, with some success my labours of a like nature, together with the desire and inclination (stirr'd up in me (I hope, by the Spirit of the Lord) to devote my vacant hours to his service in this kind. I considered, that if the Pharisees in a blind zeal to a faction, could compass Sea and Land to Proselyte men to their party, though thereby they made them sevenfold more the children of the Devil than before: How much more was I obliged by true love to God, and zeal to the everlasting happiness of souls, to use my utmost endeavours, both with Seamen & Husbandmen,

to

to win them to Chriſt, and thereby make them more than ſeventy-ſeven-fold happier than before? Not to mention other incouragements to this work, which I received from the earneſt deſires of ſome Reverend and worthy Brethren inviting thereunto; all which I hope the event will manifeſt to be a call from God to this work.

I confeſs I met with ſome diſcouragement in my firſt attempt, from my unacquaintedneſs with rural affairs; and becauſe I was to travel in a path (to me) untrodden; but having once engaged in it, thoſe diſcouragements were ſoon overcome; and being now brought to what you here ſee, I offer to your hands theſe firſt fruits of my ſpare hours.

I preſume you will account it no diſparagement, that I dedicate a Book of Husbandry to Gentlemen of your quality. This is Spiritual Husbandry, *which is here taught you; and yet I muſt tell you, that great perſons have accounted that civil employment (which is muſt inferior to this) no diſparagement to them.* The King himſelf is ſerved by the field, *Eccl.* 5. 9. *Or as* Montanus *renders the* Hebrew *Text,* Rex agro ſit ſervus; *The King himſelf is a ſervant to the field. And of King* Uzziah *it is written,*

(2 *Chron.* 26. 10.) That he loved Husbandry. *And* Amos 7. 1. *we read of the* Kings mowings. *Yea,* Pliny *hath obſerved, That Corn was never ſo plentiful at* Rome, *as when the ſame men tilled the Land that rul'd the* Commonwealth. Quaſi gauderet terra laureato vomere, ſcilicet & aratore triumphali; *As though the earth it ſelf rejoyced in the Laurel Plowſhare, and the triumphant Plowman.*

What pleaſure you will find in reading it, I know not; but to me it hath been a pleaſant path, from firſt to laſt, who yet have been at far greater expence of time and pains in compiling it, than you can be in reading it. The Husbandmans work you know, is no eaſie work, and the Spiritualizing of it hath greater difficulties attending it; but yet the pleaſure hath abundantly recompenſed the pains. I have found Eraſmus *his Obſervation experimentally true*; Qui literis addicti ſummus, animi laſſitudinem à ſtudiis gravioribus contractam; ab iiſdem ſtudiis, ſed amænioribus recreamus; *Thoſe that are addicted to ſtudy, (ſaith he) when they have wearied their ſpirits with ſtudy, can recreate them again with ſtudy, by making a diverſion from that which is*

ſevere

severe and knotty, to some more facile and pleasant Subject.

But to hear that God hath used and honoured these papers to the good of any soul, will yield me the highest content and satisfaction imaginable.

May you but learn that Lesson, which is the general Scope and Design of this Book, viz. *How to walk with God from day to day, and make the several Objects you behold*, Scalæ & alæ, *Wings and Ladders to mount your souls neerer to Him, who is the Center of all blessed Spirits. How much will it comfort me, and confirm my hope, that it was the Call of God indeed which put me upon these endeavours!*

O Sirs! What an excellent thing would it be for you, to make such holy improvements of all these earthly Objects which daily incur your senses, and cause them to proclaim and preach to you Divine and heavenly Mysteries, whilst others make them groan, by abusing them to sin, and subjecting them to their lusts. A man may be cast into such a condition, wherein he cannot enjoy the blessing and benefit of a pious and powerful Ministry; but you cannot (ordinarily) fall into such a condition wherein

any thing (except a bad heart) can deprive you of the benefits and comforts of thoſe excellent Sermons, and Divinity Lectures, which the creatures here offer to preach and read to you.

Content not your ſelves, I beſeech you, with that natural ſweetneſs the creatures afford; for thereof the beaſts are capable, as much, if not more, than you; but uſe them to thoſe ſpiritual ends you are here directed, and they will yield you a ſweetneſs far tranſcending that natural ſweetneſs you ever reliſhed in them; and indeed, you never uſe the creatures as their Lord's, *till you come to ſee* your Lord, *in and by them. I confeſs the diſcoveries of God in the Word are far more excellent, cleer and powerful*; He hath magnified his Word above all his Name. *And therein are the* unſearchable riches of Chriſt, *or rich diſcoveries of that grace that hath no footſteps in nature, as the Apoſtles expreſſion ſignifies,* Eph. 3. 8.

And if that which might be known of God by the Creatures, leave men without excuſe; as it's manifeſt, Rom. 1. 20. *How inexcuſable then will thoſe be, who have received not only the teachings of the creature, but alſo the grace of the Goſpel in vain!* How ſhall we eſcape,

if

if we neglect ſo great ſalvation? *They that are careleſs in the day of grace, ſhall be ſpeechleſs in the day of judgment.*

I am ſenſible of many defects in theſe Papers (as well as in my ſelf;) they have doubtleſs a taſte of the diſtractions of the times wherein they were written; nor was I willing to keep them ſo long under-hand, as the accurateneſs and exactneſs with which ſuch a ſubject ought to be handled did require. Had I deſigned my own credit, I ſhould have obſerved that counſel —— Nonnumque prematur in annum, *(i.e.) To have kept it much longer under the file, before I had expoſed it to publick view; but I rather inclined to* Solomons *counſel,* VVhatever thy hand finds out to do, do it with all thy might; for there is no wiſdom, nor knowledge, nor device in the grave, whither thou art going, *Eccleſ.* 9.10.

I apprehended a neceſſity of ſome ſuch means to be uſed, for the inſtruction and conviction of countrey people; who either are not capable of underſtanding truth in another Dialect, or at leaſt, are leſs affected with it. The Propoſition *in every Chapter conſiſts of an Obſervation in Husbandry; Wherein, if I have failed in*

uſing

uſing any improper expreſſion, your candour will cover it, and impute it to my unacquaintedneſs in rural affairs——In magnis voluiſſe ſat eſt.

The Reddition, *or* Application, *you will find (I hope) both pertinent and cloſe. The* Reflections *ſerious, and ſuch (as I hope) your Conſciences will faithfully improve. I have ſhut up every Chapter with a* Poem, *an innocent Bait to catch the Readers Soul.*

That of Herbert *is experimentally true.*

A Verſe may find him that a Sermon flies.
And turn delight into a Sacrifice.

I ſhould never have been perſwaded (eſpecially in this ſcribling Age, wherein we may complain with the Poet.

Scribimus indocti, doctiq; poemata paſſim)

To have ſet my dull fancy upon the Rack to extort a Poem to entertain my Reader; for I cannot ſay with Ovid, Sponte ſua carmen, *&c. but that I have been informed, that many Seamen induced by the pleaſure of a Verſe, have taken much pains to learn the* Poems *in their* Compaſs *by heart; and I hope both the Children at home, and the Servants in the fields, will*

will learn to exerciſe themſelves this way alſo. O, how much better will it be ſo to do, than to ſtuff their memories with obſcene Ballads and filthy Songs, which corrupt their minds, and diſpoſe them to much wickedneſs, by irritating their natural corruption! But theſe are purer flames, you will find nothing here of ſuch a tendency.

'Tis guilt, not Poetry, to be like thoſe
Whoſe wit in Verſe, is downright ſin in Proſe. D. Dig.
Whoſe ſtudies are prophaneneſs, as if then
They only were good Poets, when bad men.

I ſhall add no more, but to beg that God who inſtructeth the Husbandman in his civil Calling, to teach him wiſdom ſpiritually to improve it; and particularly, that you may reap a crop of much ſpiritual benefit, from that ſeed which is here ſown by the hand of the Lords unprofitable ſervant, and in him,

Your very affectionate
Friend and Servant,

JOHN FLAVELL.

TO

TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER.

THere are three things wherein (as it hath been ſaid, long before my day) the exerciſe of Godlineſs doth chiefly conſiſt: Prayer, Temptation, Meditation. Meditation is the Subject of this following Manual. The Object of Meditation is twofold. Firſt, The Word: Secondly, The Works of God. The Works of God are twofold. Firſt, Internal. Secondly, External. The External Works of God are twofold. Firſt, Of Creation: Secondly, of Providence. The works of Providence are likewiſe twofold. Firſt, In things Civil, the Lord ordering and over-ruling all the affairs and motion of ſingle Perſons, Families and Nations, in a ſubſerviency to his own moſt holy Ends, Deſigns and Purpoſes: Secondly, In things Natural, the Lord inſtructing the Husbandman to diſcretion, and teaching him how to Dreſs and Till the Earth, that it may give Seed to the Sower, and Bread to the Eater; as alſo how to breed up and manage the Beaſts of the field, both greater and leſſer Cattel, for the uſe and ſervice of Man.

Meditation upon this lower part of the Works

of God, and his wonderful Providences about them, may raise our souls very high; and while we wisely consider these natural things, we may grow more and more wise, in and for Spirituals and Eternals.

The worthy and ingenious Author of the ensuing Discourse, hath supplied us with an excellent help, for the Spiritualizing of the providential Works of God in natural things, by godly Meditations; we chiefly want the help of the holy Spirit (without which all other helps and helpers are altogether insufficient) to frame and wind up our hearts, for this, both profitable and delightful duty; yet the help which the Lord is pleased to give us for our direction in it, by the Ministery of man, is not only, not to be refused, but thankfully received and improved; and all little enough to bring our minds to, or keep them at this work: The best of Saints (on this side heaven) have (though they are not earthly minded) much earth in their minds, which like a heavy clog at their heels, or a weight at their hearts, presseth them down when they would make an Essay to mount upward in Meditation. We find it no easie matter to keep off earthly thoughts, when we are most seriously engaged in heavenly work; how hard is it then to get in, and be fixed upon heavenly thoughts while we are engaged about earthly work; yea, are (for so is the Husbandman) working the very earth, and raking in the bowels of it. 'Tis a great part of our holiness to be spiritually minded, while we are conversing with God through Jesus Christ in spiritual duties; but to be spiritually minded, and to mind spiritual things, when we are conversing with the clods of the earth, and the furrows

rows of the field, when we have to do with Corn and Grass, with Trees and Plants, with Sheep and Oxen, when we behold the birds and fowls of the Air, the worms, and all that creep upon the ground, then (I say) to be spiritually minded, and thence to have our thoughts ascending and soaring up to God, in heart-affecting and quickning contemplations, witnesseth an high degree of holiness, and of gracious attainments. To make a ladder out of earthly materials, for the raising of our selves in spirit up to heaven, is the *Art of Arts*. Holy and happy indeed are they! who (being taught of God) have learned this Art, and live in the daily practise of it. Earthly objects usually hinder us in our way, sometimes turn us quite out of our way to heaven. Many plow and sow, dig and delve the earth, till their hearts become as earthly as the earth it self: many deal about the beasts of the field, till themselves become even brutish. Is it not then a blessed design which this Author aims and drives at, so to spiritualize all sorts, or the *whole compass* of earthly Husbandry, that all sorts of husbandmen may become spiritual and heavenly? It seems to me a token for good, that *God* hath an intendment of some special good to the souls of such as are by profession proper *Husbandmen*, seeing he hath lately put it into the hearts of two faithful Ministers (who with all of that profession, are Husbandmen in a figure to undertake though in a different way, this Subject, & to publish their labours in print, that they may be of use, not only for the present age, but for posterity.

Mr. *Richard Steel*, and this Author.

And that the Husbandman may be pleased, as well as profited, in perusing the labours of this Au-

thor, he hath, with singular aptness and acuteness, contrived and contracted the sum or scope of every Chapter into an elegant Distich or pair of Verses, placed at the head of it, and concluded it with a choice melodious Poem sutable to, and dilating upon the whole matter of it. These the Husbandman, who can but read, may quickly learn and sing for his solace, instead of those vain Ballads and corrupting Rimes, which many of that rank are apt to buy, and solace themselves withal, without any benefit, yea, much to their hurt, making their hearts more corrupt, carnal and vain thereby.

Let me add one word more to the Reader. This Book of *Husbandry Spiritualized*, is not calculated only for the common Husbandman; persons of any calling or condition, may find the Author working out such searching Reflections and strong Convictions, from almost every part and particular of the Husbandmans work, as may prove, if faithfully improved, very useful to them; to some for their awakening, to consider the state of their souls, whether in grace or in nature; to others for their instruction, consolation and encouragement in the wayes of grace, as also for their proficiency and growth in those wayes. That the blessing of the Lord, and the breathings of his good Spirit may go out with it, for all those gracious purposes, is the hearts desire and prayer of him, who is,

Christian Reader,

A sincere well-wisher to thy precious and immortal soul:

JOSEPH CARYL.

To his Reverend and learned Friend, Mr. *John Flavell*, on his Spiritual Navigation and Husbandry.

LEtters of Mart to his dear Servant given,
By him that fists the ruffling winds of heaven:
To fight, and take all such as would not daign
T'acknowledge him the Seas great Soveraign.
He lanch'd his little *Pinace*, and began
T'attaque the vasals of *Leviathan*.
Auspicious gales swelling his winged Sails,
Searches all creeks, and every Bark he hails,
That scarce a Ship our Western Coasts afford
Which this brave *Pinace* hath not laid aboard.
And what among our riddles some might count,
Was seen at once at *Barwick*, and the *Mount*.
Yea, in more *Ports* hath in one *lustre* been,
Than *Hawkins*, *Drake*, or *Cavendish* have seen,
And Prizes of more worth brought home again,
Than all the *Plate-Fleets* of the Kings of *Spain*.
But that which makes the wonder swell the more,
Those whom he took were *Beggars* all before.
But rests he here? No, no, our friend doth know
'Tis good to have two strings unto his Bow.
Our rare *Amphibion* loves not to be pent
Within the bounds, of one poor Element,
Besides the learned Author understood,
That of an idle hand there comes no good,
The Law to him no *Pulpit* doth allow,
And now he cannot *Preach*, he means to *Plow*

Though

Though *Preaching* were a crime, yet he foreſaw
Againſt the *Plowman* there could be no Law.
Nor ſtayes he on reſolves, but out of hand
He yoaks his Teem, plows up the ſtubborn Land:
Sows it with precious Seed, harrows again
The tougher clods: takes pleaſure in his pain.
Whilſt *Orph'us* like, (which doth his Art advance)
Rocks, Fields, and Woods *after his pipe do dance.*

Induſtrious ſpirit, to what a rich account
With thy bleſt Lord, will all theſe labours mount?
That every nerve of thy bleſt ſoul doſt ply,
To further heavens *Spiritual Husbandry.*
This kind of Tillage which thou teacheſt us,
Was never dreamt of by *Triptolemus.*
Go Reader, turn the leaves; and me allow
To pray (whilſt at thy work) *God ſpeed the Plow.*

NICHOLAS WATTS.

In

In Authoris OPERA.

LEt *Paracelſus* and *Van-Helmont*'s name,
No more ride triumph on the wings of fame.
Lo, here's a *Chymiſt* whoſe divine skill
Doth *hallowed*, from unhallow'd things diſtil.
Spiritualizeth Sea affairs, agen,
Makes the rude ground turn Tutor unto men.
Shews *Mariners* as by a *Compaſs* how
They may unto the *Port* of Glory row.
Teacheth the *Plowmen* from their work to know
What duties unto God and man they ow.
Rare Artiſt! who when many tongues are mute
Mak'ſt things that are inanimate, confute
The Ages ſins; by preaching unto eyes,
Truths which in other modes their ears deſpiſe.
Proſper his pious Labours, Lord! howe'r
Do not forget to crown the labourer.

Sic raptim canit,

DAN. CONDY.

To

To his Reverend and Invaluable Friend Mr. J. F. *upon his Husbandry Spiritualized.*

INgenious Sir, what do I ſee? what now!
Are you come from the Pulpit to the Plow?
If ſo, then pardon me if I profeſs;
The Plow deſerves to be ſent to the Preſs.
'Tis not long ſince you went to Sea they ſay,
Compos'd a * Compaſs which directs the way
And ſteers the courſe to heaven, O bleſt Art!
And bravely done, that you did that impart
To us, who take it kindly at your hand,
And bleſs the Lord that you are come to Land.
To be an Husbandman wherein your skill
With admiration doth your Readers fill.
One grain will yield increaſe, it's ten times ten,
When th'earth's manur'd by ſuch Husbandmen.
We may expect rich harveſts, and full crops,
When heavenly dew deſcendeth in ſuch drops
Of ſpiritual rain, to water every field
That it full heaps of grace to God may yield.
I muſt adore the wiſdom of that God
That makes men wiſe, who even from a clod
Of earth can raiſe ſuch heavenly Meditation
Unto a pitch of higheſt elevation.
Beſides, I mark the goodneſs of the Lord
Performing unto us his faithful Word,

* Navigation Spiritualized.

That

That all ſhall work for good unto the Saints
Which in ſome meaſure leſſens our complaints.
For though our Pulpit mercies be grown leſs,
We have ſome gracious helps yet from the Preſs.
And herein all the world may plainly ſee,
That faithful ſervants will not idle be.
We have ſome bricks, although the ſtraw be gone.
The Church at laſt ſhall be of poliſht ſtone.
What ever men or Devils act, or ſay,
Sion at laſt will have a glorious day.
The wretched muck-worm that from morn to night
Labours as if 'twere for an heavenly weight,
And when he hath got all he can, the moſt
Amounts to little more than a poor cruſt
To feed his tired carkaſe, if himſelf
Have by his carking got a little pelf
Leave it he muſt, to one he knows not whom,
And then muſt come to eternal doom;
And hear his poor neglected wretched ſoul
Tell him at laſt that he hath play'd the fool.
But here he's taught how he before he dye
May lay up treaſure for eternity.
Wherein he may be rich, yea, much much more
Than they that do poſſeſs whole mines of Oar.
When earth's more worth than heaven, & gold than grace
Then let the worldling run his bruitiſh race,
But not before unleſs he do intend
To meet with ſoul-deſtruction in the end.
But I muſt leave him, and return again
To gratulate the author for his pain.
And here I can't forbear to let my pen
To tell the world of all the Husbandmen
That er'e I met, he, he hath hit the vein
To recompenſe the Labourers hard pain,
And taught him how to get the greateſt gain.
Wherein he treads a path not trod before,
By which indeed his ſkill appears the more.

I might *Encomiums* give him great and true,
And yet come ſhort of what's his due.
But I muſt not walk in forbidden wayes
For thereby I am ſure I ſhould diſpleaſe
His pious mind, who doth and freely can
Give all the praiſe to the great Husbandman.
Who will his graces in his ſervants own,
But doth expect himſelf to wear the Crown,
Farewel dear Sir, I take my leave, and now
Will ſay no more but this, *God ſpeed the plow.*

EDWARD JEFFERY.

THE

A gracious heart
here learnes the art
Of soaring up on high
Upon the Wings
of earthly things
That Underfoot doe lye
Noe Bird that flyes
beneath the skies
But by this holy craft
will lend a feather
To help it thither
And give the heart a waft.

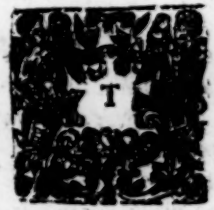
darkly represents
, and principall contents,
Beast, Heart, Stone, String, and Tree
first glance you see,
which cannot be unkinde,
to divulge her minde.
ould you see the Things
hem: then view her Wings.

Noe Bird that flyes
beneath the skies
But by this holy craft
will lend a feather
To helpe it thither
And give the heart a waft

Birds beasts and trees
teach mysteries
If sinners be not blocks
They'l quickly mend
when God doth send
Teachers in droves and Flocks
Tross sculpsit

BRITISH
23JY73
MUSEUM

THE EPISTLE TO THE Intelligent Countrey READER.



THOU haſt here the fruit of ſome of my ſpare hours, which were thus imployed, when by a ſad providence I was thruſt from the ſociety of many dear friends, into a ſolitary countrey dwelling. I hope none will envy me theſe innocent delights, which I made out of my lonely walks, whereby the Lord ſweetned my ſolitudes there. 'Tis like thou wilt find ſome paſſages here, that are harmleſly pleaſant; yet, I aſſure thee, I know of none that the moſt Cynical Reader *can cenſure as ſinfully light and vain. I muſt acknowledge to the praiſe of God, that I have found ſome of thoſe (which poſſibly ſome of my Readers will call the ſlighteſt and moſt trifling ſubjects of meditation) to be the Ordinances for*

Instruction, Caution, *and* Consolation *to my own soul: yea, such a degree of comfort, I do profess, to have found by these things, as hath much endeared the countrey life to me, and made me much better to understand that saying of* Horace, *than when I learn'd it at school,*

Hor. *Sat 6.*

Novistine locum potiorem rure beato?
Est ubi plus tapeant hyems? ubi gracior aura?
O rus, quando te ad spiciam? quandoque licebit
Nunc veterum libris, nunc somno, & inertibus hortis
Ducere solicitæ jucunda oblivio vitæ, (*i. e.*)
What life can with the Country life compare?
Where breaths the purest, and most healthful Air.
Where undisturb'd, my studies I pursue;
And when I sleep, bid all my cares adieu.

And what I have found so beneficial to my self, I cannot but think may be so to others. I assure thee Reader, I am not fond of any of these conceptions; and yet I think I may modestly enough say, that the emptiest leaf in this book, may serve for more and better uses than a meer diversion, when thou canst find leisure to peruse it. I know your troubles and cares are many, and though your condition of lif hath many innocent comforts, and outward mercies to sweeten it, yet I believe most of you have found, that ancient saying of Anaxion *experimentally true,* Ἔχει τι πικρὸν τῆς γεωργίας γλυκύ.

Some bitter troubles Countrey men do meet,
Wherewith the Lord doth intermix their sweet.

The cares *of your* minds, *are commonly no less than the* paines *of your* Bodies; *it concerns you therefore, to*

sweeten

ſweeten *what you cannot* avoid; *and I know no better way for that than what is here directed to. O friends! what advantages have you, for a ſpiritual life? Why may you not have two harveſts every year? one for your Souls, another for your bodies; if you could thus learn to husband your Husbandry. Methinks ſpiritual Meditations do even put themſelves upon you. Husbandmen of old were generally preſumed to be honeſt and good men; what elſe means that ſaying of* Menander, Αγροῖκος εἶναι τροσποιῆ πόνερος ὤν.

Profeſs thy ſelf an Husbandman,
And wicked too! believ't that can.

What you are, godly or wicked is not for me (that am a ſtranger to moſt of you) to determine; but if you are not godly, its my deſire & deſign to make you ſo; and I could not think on a more probable means to accompliſh this honeſt deſign, than what I have here uſed. Methinks it ſhould be a pleaſure to you, when you come weary out of the fields from plow, or any other labour, to ſit down in the evening, and read that chapter which concerns that particular buſineſs, & refreſh *your* Souls *even from that which hath* wearied *your* bodies. *Were your hearts but heavenly, & more time allowed for ſpiritual husbandry your inward comforts, would be much more, & your out ward gains not a jot leſs; for if the ſucceſs of all your civil labours and impolyments depend upon the pleaſure & will of God; (as all that are not Atheiſts do acknowledge) then certainly, your buſineſs can ſucceed never the worſe, for your endeavours to pleaſe him, upon whoſe pleaſure it ſo intirely depends. I have many times lifted up my heart to heaven, whilſt theſe papers were under my*

hand

hand, for a ſpecial bleſſing to accompany them, when they ſhould be in yours. If the Lord accompliſh my deſires by them upon your ſouls, you ſhall enjoy two heavens, one here, and another hereafter. Would not that be ſweet? The Hiſtorian *tells us, that* Altitius Serarius *was ſowing Corn in the field, when* Q. Cincinnatus *came to him bare headed, with letters from the* Senate, *ſignifying that he was choſen to the* Dictatorſhip. *I hope the Lord will ſo bleſs and ſucceed theſe labours, that many of you will be called from holding the* Plow *on earth, to wear the* Crown *of glory in heaven; which is the ſincere deſire*

Of

Your hearty Well-wiſher,

JOHN FLAVELL.

THE

Author to the Reader.

COme you whoſe liſtning ears do even itch,
To hear the way preſcrib'd of growing rich;
I'le ſhew you how to make your Tenements
Ten thouſand times more worth, and yet your rents
Not rais'd a farthing; here my Reader ſees,
A way to make his dead and barren trees;
Yield precious fruit, his Sheep though ne're ſo bad
Bear golden fleeces, ſuch ne're *Jaſon* had.
In every thing your gain ſhall more than double,
And all this had with far leſs toyl and trouble.
Methinks, I hear thee ſay this cannot be,
I'le ne're believe it: well, read on and ſee.
Reader, hadſt thou but ſenſes exercis'd
To judge aright; were ſpiritual things but priz'd
At their juſt value, thou wouldſt quickly ſay
'Tis ſo indeed; thou wouldſt not go thy way
Like one that's diſappointed, and ſo fling
The book aſide, *I thought 'twas ſome ſuch thing.*
Time was when Countrey Chriſtians did afford,
More hours and pains about God's holy Word;
Witneſs the man who did moſt gladly pay
For ſome few leaves his whole Cart load of Hay.
And time ſhall be when heavenly truth that warms
The heart ſhall be prefer'd before your Farms.
When HOLINESS as ſacred Scripture tells,
Shall be engraven on the Horſes bells.
Lord haſten on thoſe much deſired times;
And to that purpoſe bleſs theſe rural Rimes.

THE PROEM.

1 COR. 3. 9.

Ye are God's Husbandry.

THE ſcope and deſign of the following Chapters, being the ſpiritual improvement of Husbandry, it will be neceſſary by way of *Proem*, to acquaint the Reader with the Foundation and general Rules of this Art in the Scriptures, thereby to procure greater reſpect unto, and prevent prejudice againſt compoſures of this kind.

To this end I ſhall entertain the Reader a little while upon what this Scripture affords us, which will give a fair Introduction to the following Diſcourſe.

The Apoſtle's ſcope in the context being to check and repreſs the vain glory and emulation of the *Corinthians*, who inſtead of thankfulneſs for, and an humble and diligent improvement of the excellent bleſſings of the Miniſtry; turn'd all into vain oſtentation and emulation, one preferring *Paul*, and another *Apollos*, in the maan time depriving themſelves

of the choice bleſſings they might have received from them both.

To cure this growing miſchief in the Churches, he checks their vanity, and diſcovers the evil of ſuch practiſes; by ſeveral Arguments, amongſt which this is one.

Ye are God's Husbandry, q. d.

What are ye, but a field, or plot of ground, to be manured and cultivated for God? and what are *Paul*, *Apollo*, and *Cephas*, but ſo many work-men and labourers, imployed by God, the great Husbandman, to plant and water you all?

If then, you ſhall glory in ſome, and deſpiſe others, you take the ready way to deprive your ſelves of the benefits and mercies you might receive from the joint Miniſtry of them all. God hath uſed me to plant you, and *Apollo* to water you; you are obliged to bleſs him for the Miniſtry of both, and it will be your ſin if you deſpiſe either. If the work-men be diſcouraged in their labours, 'tis the field that loſes and ſuffers by it; ſo that the words are a ſimilitude, ſerving to illuſtrate the Relation.

1. Which the Churches have to God.
2. Which God's Miniſters have to the Churches.

1. * *Fideles vocantur dei,* γεώργιον, *quia a Deo per paſtores, tanquam arvum excoluntur.* Rav.

The relation betwixt God and them, is like that of an Husbandman to his ground or tillage. The Greek word ſignifies Gods * *Arable*, or that plot of ground which God manures by the miniſtry of Paſtors and Teachers.

2. It ſerves to illuſtrate the relation that the Miniſters of Chriſt ſuſtain to the Churches, which is like that of the Husbands ſervants to him, and his fields; which excellent notion carries in it the perpetual neceſſity of a Goſpel-Miniſtry. (For what fruit can be expected, where there are none to till the ground?) As alſo the diligence, accountableneſs, and rewards, which theſe labourers are to give to, and receive from God, the great Husbandman. All runs into this.

That the life and imployment of an Husbandman, excellently ſhadows forth the relation betwixt God and his Church, and the relative duties betwixt its Miniſters and members.

Or more briefly thus.

The

The Church is God's Husbandry, about which his Miniſters are imployed.

I ſhall not here obſerve my uſual Method, (intending no more but a Preface to the following Diſcourſe) but only open the particulars wherein the reſemblance conſiſts; and then draw ſome Corrolaries from the whole. The firſt I ſhall diſpatch in theſe twenty particulars following.

1. *Prop.* The Husbandman purchaſes his fields, and gives a valuable conſideration for them, *Jer.* 32. 9, 10.

Reddit. So hath God purchaſed his Church with a full valuable price, even the precious blood of his own Son, *Act.* 20. 28. *Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchaſed, or acquired with his own blood.* O dear-bought inheritance, how much doth this beſpeak its worth? or rather, the high eſteem God hath of it, to pay down blood, and ſuch blood for it; never was any inheritance bought at ſuch a rate: every particular elect perſon, and none but ſuch as are comprehended in this purchaſe, the reſt ſtill remain in the devils right. Sin made a forfeiture of all to juſtice, upon which Satan entred and took poſſeſſion, and as a ſtrong man armed, ſtill keeps it in them, *Luke* 11. 21. but upon payment of this ſum to juſtice, the Elect (who only are intended in this purchaſe) paſs over into God's right and propriety, and now are neither Satans, *Acts* 26. 18. nor their own, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19. but the *Lord's peculiar.* 1 *Pet.* 2. 6. And to ſhew how much they are his own, you have two *poſſeſſives* in one verſe, *Cant.* 8. 12. *My vineyard, which is mine is before me. Mine, which is mine.*

2. *Prop.* Husbandmen divide and ſeparate their own Lands from other mens, they have their Land-marks and boundaries, by which propriety is preſerved, *Deut.* 27. 17. *Prov.* 22. 28.

Reddit. So are the people of God wonderfully ſeparated, and diſtinguiſht from all the people of the earth, *Pſal.* 4. 3. *The Lord hath ſet apart him that is godly for himſelf, and the Lord knoweth who are his,* 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. It is a ſpecial act of grace, to be incloſed by God out of the waſte howling wilderneſs of the world, *Deut.* 33. 16. This God did *intentionally*, in the decree before the world was; which decree is executed in their ſanctification and adoption.

3. *Prop.* Corn-fields are carefully fenced by the Husbandman with hedges and ditches, to preſerve their fruits from beaſts that would otherwiſe over-run and deſtroy them---*Non minus eſt virtus quam querere parta tueri.* It is as good Husbandry to keep what we have, as to acquire more than we had.

Reddit. *My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill, and he fenced it*, Iſa. 5. 1, 2. No inheritance is better defended and ſecured, than the Lords inheritance, *Pſal.* 125. 2. *As the mountains are round about* Jeruſalem, *ſo the Lord is round about his people.* So careful is he for their ſafety, *that he createth upon every dwelling place of mount* Sion, *and upon her aſſemblies, a cloud and ſmoke by day, and the ſhining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory ſhall be a defence*, Iſa. 4. 5. Not a particular Saint, but is hedged about and incloſed in arms of power and love, *Job* 1. 10. *Thou haſt made a hedge about him.* The Devil fain would, but by his own confeſſion could not, break over that hedge to touch *Job*, till Gods permiſſion made a gap for him: Yea, he not only makes an hedge, but a wall about them, and that of fire, *Zech.* 2. 5. *Sets a guard of Angels to encamp round about them that fear him*, *Pſal.* 34. 7. and will not truſt them with a ſingle guard of Angels neither, though their power be great, and love to the Saints as great; but watches over them himſelf alſo, *Iſa.* 27. 2, 3. *Sing ye unto her, a vineyard of red wine, I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment; leſt any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.*

4. *Prop.* Husbandmen carry out their Compoſt; to fertilize their arable ground, they dung it, dreſs it, and keep it in heart; and in theſe Weſtern parts are at great charges to bring lime, and ſalt water ſand to quicken their thin and cold ſoyl.

Reddit. *Lord, let it alone this year alſo, till I ſhall dig about it and dung it; and if it bear fruit well, if not, cut it down*, Luke 13. 8. O the rich dreſſing which God beſtows upon his Churches! they are coſtly fields indeed, dreſt and fertilized, not only by precious Ordinances and Providences, but alſo by the ſweat, yea, bloud of the diſpenſers of them. "You *Londoners* (ſaith "Mr. *Lockier*) are trees watered choicely indeed; 'tis ſto- "ried of the Palm-tree, that at its firſt tranſplanting into "*Italy*, 'twas watered with wine, I cannot ſay (ſaith he) that

Lockier in Colol. p. 552.

"you have been ſo watered by me, I dare not; but this I can "humbly and truly ſay, that if our choiceſt ſtrength and "ſpirits may be named inſtead of water, wine; or if the "bleſſing which hath gone along with theſe waters, at any "time, hath turned them into wine, in vigour upon your "ſouls; then hath God by me, watered your roots with "wine.

The Husbandman builds his houſe, where he makes his purchaſe, dwells upon his Land, and frequently viſits it; he knows, that ſuch as dwell far from their *Lands*, are not far from *loſs*. 5. *Prop.*

So doth God; where-ever he plants a Church there doth he fix his habitation, intending there to dwell, *Pſal.* 46. 5. *God is in the midſt of her*, ſhe ſhall not be moved. Thus God came to dwell upon his own Fee and Inheritance, in *Judea*, *Levit.*26. 11, 12. *And I will ſet my tabernacle amongſt you, and will be your God, and ye ſhall be my people.* Which promiſe is again renew'd to his Churches of the New Teſtament, 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. And when the Churches ſhall be in their greateſt flouriſh, and purity, then ſhall there be the fulleſt and moſt glorious manifeſtation of the divine preſence among them, *Rev.*21.3. *And I heard a great voice out of heaven, ſaying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and be their God.* Hence the Aſſemblies are called, the places of his feet---And there they *behold the beauty of the Lord*, *Pſal.* 27. *Reddit.*

Husbandmen grudge not at the coſt they are at for their tillage; but as they lay out vaſt ſums upon it, ſo, they do it cheerfully. 6. *Prop.*

And now, O inhabitants of Jeruſalem, *and men of* Juda, *judge I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard; what could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?* And as he beſtows upon his heritage, the choiceſt mercies, ſo he doth it with the greateſt cheerfulneſs; for he ſaith, *Jer.* 32. 41. *I will rejoyce over them, to do them good; and I will plant them in this Land aſſuredly, with my whole heart and with my whole ſoul.* It is not the giving out of mercy (ſaith one) that grieveth God, but the recoyling of his mercies back again *Reddit.*

again upon him by the creatures ingratitude.

7. *Prop.* When Husbandmen have been at coſt and pains about their Husbandry, they expect fruit from it, anſwerable to their pains and expences about it: *Behold* (ſaith *James*) *the Husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth*, Jam. 5. 7.

Reddit. *And he looked that it ſhould bring forth fruit*, Iſa. 5. 2. This heavenly Husbandman waits for the fruits of his fields alſo; never did any Husbandman long for the deſired Harveſt, more than God doth for the fruits of holineſs from his Saints; great are the expectations of God from his people: *And when the time of the fruit drew near, he ſent his ſervants to the Husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.*

8. *Prop.* Husbandmen are much delighted, to ſee the ſucceſs of their labours, it comforts them over all their hard pains, and many weary dayes, to ſee a good increaſe.

Reddit. Much more is God delighted, in beholding the flouriſhing graces of his people; it pleaſes him to ſee his plants laden with fruit, and his valleys ſing with corn, *Cant.* 6. 2. *My beloved is gone down into his garden, into his beds of ſpices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lillies.* Theſe beds of ſpices (ſay Expoſitors) are the particular Churches, the companies of Believers; he goes to feed in theſe gardens, like as men go to their gardens to make merry, or to gather fruit, *Cant.* 4. 16. *He eats his pleaſant fruit*, viz. His peoples holy performances, ſweeter to him than any *Ambroſia*; thus he feeds in the gardens, and he gathers lillies when he tranſlates good ſouls into his Kingdom above; *For the Lord taketh pleaſure in his Saints, and will beautifie the meek with ſalvation.*

Paſcitur Chriſtus quando ſuorum virtutes videt, lillia decerpit, quando optimum quemque ex hac vita traducit. Trap. *in loc.*

9. *Prop.* The Husbandman is exceedingly grieved, when he ſees the hopes of a good crop diſappointed, and his fields prove barren, or blaſted.

Reddit. So the Lord expreſſes his grief for, and anger againſt his people, when they bring forth no fruits, or wilde fruits, worſe than none, *Hoſ.* 9. 16. *Ephraim is ſmitten, their root is dryed up.* Chriſt was exceedingly diſpleaſed with the fig-tree, and curſed it for its barrenneſs; it grieves him to the heart when his ſervants return to him with ſuch complaints as theſe, *We have laboured in vain, we have ſpent our ſtrength for nought.*

Husband-

Husbandmen imploy many labourers to work in their fields, there is need of many hands for such a multiplicity of business. 10. *Prop.*

God hath diversity of workmen also in the Churches, whom he sends forth to labour in his spiritual fields, *Eph.* 4. 12. *He gave some Apostles, some Prophets, and some Evangelists; and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints for the work of the Ministry. Amos* 3. 7. I have sent [*my servants*] *the Prophets.* 'Tis usual with the Apostles to place this title of servant among their honorary titles, though a prophane mouth once called it, *Probosum artificium*, a sordid artifice. Christ hath stampt a great deal of dignity upon his Ministers, in retaining them for the neerest service to himself, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. *Let a man so account of us, as the Ministers of Christ*; they are workers together with God: the Husbandman works in the field among his labourers, and the great God disdaineth not to work in and with his poor servants in the work of the Ministry. *Reddit.*

The work about which Husbandmen imploy their servants in the field, is toylsom and spending. You see they come home at night as weary as they can draw their legs after them. 11. *Prop.*

But Gods workmen have a much harder task than they. Hence they are set forth in Scripture by the laborious ox, 1 *Cor.* 9. 9. *Rev.* 4. 7. Some derive the word * Deacon from a word that signifies dust, to shew the laboriousness of their imployment, labouring till even choaked with dust and sweat. 'Tis said of *Epaphroditus*, *Phil.* 2. 13. *That for the work of Christ he was sick, and nigh unto death; not regarding his life to supply their lack of service.* The Apostles expression, *Col.* 1. *ult.* is very emphatical, *Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working; which worketh in me mightily.* The word signifies, such spending labour as puts a man into an agony; and blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing. *Reddit.*

* Διάκονος, à κόνις.

Ἀγωνιζόμενος.

The immediate end of the Husbandmans labour, and his servants labour, is for the improvement of his Land, to make it more flourishing and fruitful. 12. *Prop.*

The

Reddit. The ſcope and end of the Miniſtry is for the Churches benefit and advantage. They muſt not lord it over God's heritage, as if the Church were for them, and not they for the Church; nor ſerve themſelves of it, but be the Churches ſervants for Jeſus ſake, 2 *Cor.*4.6. the power they have received being for edification,and not for deſtruction,2 *Cor.*10.8. Chriſt hath given them to the Churches, their gifts, their time, their ſtrength, and all their Miniſterial talents are not their own, but the Churches ſtock and treaſure.

13. *Prop.* The workmen that labour in the fields,are accountable for their work to him that imploy'd them.

Reddit. Church-Officers are alſo accountable to God for all the ſouls committed to them. They are Stewards of the Myſteries of God, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. and Stewards are accountable. *We watch for your ſouls*(ſaith the Apoſtle)*as they that muſt give an account*, *Heb.*13.7. If theſe ſervants be unfaithful in their work and truſt, the blood of ſouls ſhall be required at their hands, *Ezek.* 3. 17, 18. which are *fulmina*, *non verba* (ſaith *Eraſmus*) thunder-bolts, rather than words. The guilt of blood is the greateſt guilt; and of all blood, the blood of ſouls.

14. *Prop.* Thoſe that ſpend their time and ſtrength all their dayes, in manuring, and plowing the fields, do maintain themſelves and their families by their labours; their hands are ſufficient for themſelves and theirs.

Reddit. *Even ſo hath God ordained,that they which preach the Goſpel, ſhould live of the Goſpel*,1 Cor. 9.14. *The workman is worthy of his meat*, Mat. 10. 10. 'Tis a ſad thing, if thoſe who break the bread of life to ſouls, ſhould be ſuffered to want bread themſelves. God would not have the mouth of the ox muzled that treads out the corn,but have liberty to eat,as well as work: Yet, if any pretender to the Miniſtry be like the Heifer that loves to tread out the corn, (*i. e.*) cares to do no work, but ſuch as brings in preſent pay; he therein ſufficiently diſcovers his beaſt-like diſpoſition. Miniſters muſt be faithful in their Maſters work, and if men do not, God will reward them. For, *He is not unrighteous to forget their work, and labour of love*, *Heb.* 6. 10.

It

15. *Prop.* It is a great trouble to Husbandmen in a buſie time, to be put off from their labours by ſtormy weather, which drives them out of the fields, and makes them let all lye, till it clear up again; yet, mean-while, they are not idle, but imploy themſelves in home work.

Reddit. Even ſo in God's Husbandry, 'tis an unſpeakable affliction to God's workmen to be rendred uſeleſs and unſerviceable to the Churches, by thoſe ſtorms of trouble, which drive them from their publick Miniſterial work. With what a heavy heart did *Paul* go off from his work at *Epheſus*, Act. 20. It ſpends a Miniſter to preach, but more to be ſilent. 'Tis a loud ſpeaking judgment, when God ſhall ſay to them as to *Ezekiel*, *Son of man, I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and thou ſhalt be dumb*, Ezek. 3. 26. Such ſilencing providences, ſpeaking thundring language to gracious hearts, yet even then, the keepers of the vineyard have a private vineyard of their own to look after, they have much home-work when no out-work.

16. *Prop.* There is a vaſt difference betwixt thoſe fields which have been well husbanded, and dreſt by a skilful and diligent Husbandman; and thoſe that have been long out of husbandry. How fragrant is the one! how dry and barren the other? When you paſs by a field well dreſſed and fenced, every thing proſperous and in exquiſite order, you may know without farther enquiry, that a good Husband lives there.

Reddit. Thus ſtands the caſe betwixt thoſe places which God hath bleſt with a faithful painful Miniſtry, and ſuch as have none, or worſe than none: For as the Husbandmans coſt and pains appears in the verdant, and fragrant hew of his fields; ſo a Miniſters pains and diligence is (ordinarily) ſeen in the heavenly lives, and flouriſhing graces of the people. The Churches of *Corinth* and *Theſſalonica*, where *Paul* and other holy inſtruments ſpent much of their time and pains became famous and flouriſhing Churches, 2 *Cor.* 9. 2. A ſpecial bleſſing comes along with a godly Miniſter, to the place where ſpecial providence aſſigns him. Such places like *Gideon's* fleece, have the dew of heaven lying on them, whiles others round about are dry and barren.

17. *Prop.* The Husbandman is not discouraged, though the seed lye long under the clods, he knows it will spring up at last, and reward him, or those that come after him, for their pains and patience in waiting for it.

Reddit. Ministers should not be presently discouraged in their work, because they see but little or no appearance, of all the seed they have sown among the people. *The servant of the Lord must be patient towards all, waiting if at any time God will give them repentance*, 2 *Tim.* 24. 25. And if it never spring up in his time, it may after his death; and if so, he shall not fail of his reward, *Joh.* 4. 36, 37. *And he that reapeth, receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal, that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth may rejoyce together; and herein is that saying true, one soweth, and another reapeth.* Though Ministers die, yet their words live; yea, their words take hold of men when they are in the dust, *Zech.* 1. 6.

18. *Prop.* Husbandmen find low ground and valleys, most fertile. Hills, how loftily soever, they over-top the lower grounds, yet answer not the Husbandmans pains, as the valleys do. These are best watered and secured from the scorching heat of the Sun.

Reddit. Experience shews us, that the humblest Saints are most fruitful under the Gospel. *These are they that receive with meekness the ingraffed word*, Jam. 1. 21. whose influences abide in them, as the rain doth in the low valleys. Happy is that Minister, whose lot falls in such a pleasant valley. *Blessed are they that sow beside all such waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass*, Isa. 32. 20. Among these valleys run the pleasant springs, and purling brooks, which fertilize the neighbouring ground. Heavenly Ordinances there, leave fruitful influences.

19. *Prop.* The first Crop is usually the best; and the longer the Husbandman tills his ground, the less it produces. After a few years its vigour and strength is spent.

Reddit. The first entertainment of the Gospel is commonly the best; and what good is done by the Ministry, is often done at its first entrance. New things are pretty, and very taking. *John at first was to the Jews a burning and a shining light, and they*

they were willing [*for a ſeaſon*] *to rejoyce in his light*, Joh. 5. 35. *Paul* was highly valued among the *Galatians* at firſt: ſuch was their zeal, that they could have pluckt out their eyes and have given them to him; but how quickly did this full tyde ebb again? for he complains, *Gal.* 4. 15. *Where then is the bleſſedneſs ye ſpake of.*

20. *Prop.* Laſtly, When fields prove barren, and will not quit the Husbandmans coſt, nor anſwer the ſeed he ſows in them, he plucks up the hedges, and layes it waſte.

Reddit. So when Churches grow formal and fruitleſs, the Lord removes his Goſpel-preſence from them; plucks up the hedge of his protection from about them, and layes them open, as waſte ground, to be over-run by their enemies, *Jer.* 7. 12. *Go to* Shiloh, *and ſee what I did unto it.* What is become of thoſe once famous and flouriſhing Churches of *Aſia*? Are they not laid waſte, and trodden down by infidels? And now go to (ſaith the great Husbandman) *I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will pull up the hedge thereof, and it ſhall be laid waſte*, Iſa. 5. 5.

Thus you ſee the Allegory opened in its particulars: from the whole, I ſhall preſent you with theſe five enſuing *Corrolaries.*

The Firſt Corrolary.

How great then are the dignities and priviledges of the Churches of Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath appropriated to himſelf, above all the people of the earth, to be his peculiar inheritance? The reſt of the world is a waſte wilderneſs; all other places, how pleaſant ſoever, in reſpect of their natural amœnity and delights, are truly enough called, the dark places of the earth; diſmal, ſolitary cells, where *Ziim* and *Iim*, *Bitterns*, *Cormorants*, and every doleful creature dwells. But the Church is the Paradiſe of the earth, *a garden incloſed*, Cant. 4. 12. in whoſe hedges the Goſpel-birds chirp and ſing melodiouſly, *Cant.* 2. 12. Its beds, are beds of ſpices, *Cant.* 6. 2. and betwixt its pleaſant banks, a Chriſtal River of living water runs, *Rev.* 22. 1. the ſtreams whereof make glad the City of God;

in the midſt thereof the Lord himſelf delights to walk. O *Sion!* with what pleaſures doſt thou abound!- If *Bernard* were ſo raviſhed with the delights of his *Monaſtery*, becauſe of its green banks, and ſhady bowers, and herbs, and trees, and various objects to feed his eyes, and fragrant ſmells, and ſweet and various tunes of birds, together with the opportunities of devout contemplation, that he cryed out admiringly, *Lord! what delights doſt thou provide, even for the poor!* How much more ſhould we be raviſhed with *Sion*'s glory? for *beautiful for ſcituation, is mount Zion.* Of whom it may much more truly be ſaid, what a Chronicler of our own once ſaid of *England*, that it is the fortunate Iſland, the Paradice of Pleaſure, the Garden of God, whoſe valleys are like *Eden*, whoſe hills are as *Lebanon*, whoſe ſprings are as *Piſgah*, whoſe Rivers are as *Jordan*, whoſe wall is the *Ocean*, and whoſe defence is the Lord *Jehovah*. Happy art thou, O *Iſrael*, who is like unto thee? Who can count the priviledges wherewith Chriſt hath inveſted his Churches? O let it never ſeem a light thing in our eyes, that we grow within his bleſſed incloſure. How ſweet a promiſe is that, *Exod.* 19. 5. *Ye ſhall be to me a peculiar treaſure above all people; for all the earth is mine.*

Speeds Chron.

The Second Corrolary.

Hence it follows, That ſpiritual barrenneſs is a great reproach and ſhame to Chriſtians. Shall God's Husbandry, which is ſo planted, watered, fenced, filled with favours and mercies, be like the barren heath in the deſert? Surely it ſhould be ſaid of every ſoul that grows here, as the *Hiſtorian* ſaith of *Spain*, that there is *nihil infructuoſum, nihil ſterile*; nothing barren or unfruitful in it. God's vineyard is planted in a very fruitful hill, *Iſa.* 5. 1. *And ſurely they that are planted in the houſe of the Lord, ſhould flouriſh in the Court of our God; they ſhould bring forth fruit, even in old age, to ſhew that God is upright*, Pſal. 92. 13, 14. *They are created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, which God hath ordained they ſhould walk in*, Eph. 2. 10. *They are married unto Chriſt, that they might bring*

bring forth fruit to God, Rom.7.4. An empty branch is a dishonour to the root that bears it, a barren field to the Husbandman that owns it; God cannot endure that in his fields, which he ſuffers in the wilderneſs.

The third Corrolary.

If the Church be God's Husbandry, then there is ſuch a ſpecial gracious preſence of the Lord in his Churches, as is not to be found in all the world beſide. Where may you expect to find the Husbandman, but in his own fields? there lyes his buſineſs, and there he delights to be. And where may we expect to find God, but in the Aſſemblies of his Saints? *He walks amongſt the golden Candleſticks*, Rev. 2. 1. I will walk among you (ſaith he) and be your God, 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. Upon this account the Church is called *Jehovah Shamah*; the Lord is there, *Ezek.* 48. *ult.* You may ſee the *footſteps* of God in the *creatures*; but the *face* of God is only to be ſeen in his *Ordinances*. Hence *Pſal.*27.4. *David long'd for the Temple, that he might ſee the beauty of the Lord.* Now, what is beauty, but a ſymetry and proportion of parts? In the works of *Creation*, you ſee one attribute manifeſted in one thing, and another, in another thing; but in the *Sanctuary* you may ſee beauty, even in all the attributes of God diſplayed there: And indeed, we find in Scripture ſuch aſtoniſhing expreſſions about the viſions of God in his Church, that in reading them, a man can ſee little difference betwixt it and heaven; for as the Church is called heaven, *Mat.*25.1. ſo its deſcription is like that of heaven, *Heb.* 12. 22, 23. *You are come to the heavenly* Jeruſalem, *and to an innumerable company of Angels, &c.* And *Rev.* 4. 22. *They ſhall ſee his face, and his name ſhall be written in their foreheads.* And *v.*24. *The Saints are repreſented ſtanding nearer to the throne of God, than the Angels themſelves.* Hence alſo Ordinances are called *Galleries*, in which both Saints and Angels walk, beholding the glory of him that ſits upon the throne, *Zech.* 3.7. *If you will keep my wayes, I will give you Galleries to walk in, among them that ſtand by.*

The

The Fourth Corrolary.

If the Church be God's Husbandry, then thoſe that be imployed in Miniſterial work, ought to be men of great judgment and experience in ſoul affairs; for theſe are the labourers whom God, the myſtical Husbandman imploys and entruſts about his ſpiritual Husbandry. Should Husbandmen imploy ignorant perſons, that neither underſtand the rules, nor proper ſeaſons of Husbandry; how much would ſuch workmen damnifie and prejudice him? he will not imploy ſuch to weed his fields, as know not wheat from tares; or to prune his trees, that think *Midſummer* as fit for that work as *December*; much leſs will God. He qualifies all that he ſends, with wiſdom for their work. *His workmen approve themſelves workmen indeed, ſuch as need not be aſhamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*, 2 Tim. 2. 15. As *Bezaleel* was furniſhed with wiſdom, before he was imployed in Tabernacle-work, ſo Chriſt inſtructs his ſervants, with skill and inſight, before they are imployed in Miniſterial-work. He gives them a mouth and wiſdom, *Luke* 21. 15. indues them with power from on high: as Chriſt was filled abundantly with the Spirit for his work, ſo according to proportion, are thoſe that are ſent by him, *Joh.* 20. 21, 22. *As my Father hath ſent me, ſo ſend I you.* And as for thoſe that run before they are ſent, and underſtand not the Myſteries of the Goſpel, I ſhall ſay no more of them, but this; *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

The Fifth Corrolary.

To conclude, If the Church be God's Husbandry, that is, if Husbandry have ſo many reſemblances of Gods works about the Church in it; then how inexcuſable is the ignorance of Husbandmen, in the things of God, who beſides the word of the Goſpel, have the teachings of the Creatures; and can hardly turn their hands to any part of their work, but the Spirit hints one ſpiritual uſe or other from it to their ſouls?

ſouls? How do the Scriptures abound with Parables, and lively ſimilitudes taken from Husbandry? from the field, the ſeed, the plow, the barn, from threſhing and winnowing; ſimilitudes alſo from planting, graffing, and pruning of trees; and not a few from the ordering of Cattel. So that, to what buſineſs ſoever you turn your hands, in any part of your calling, ſtill God meets you, with one heavenly inſtruction or other. But alas! How few are able to improve their civil imployments to ſuch excellent ends? Theſe things are but briefly hinted in the Scriptures, and thoſe hints ſcattered up and down, that they know not where to find them; and if they could, yet would it be difficult ſo to methodize them, as it is neceſſary they ſhould be, in order to their due improvement, by Meditation.

And therefore I judged it neceſſary to collect and prepare them for your uſe; and in this manner to preſent them to you, as you find them in the following Chapters. Read, conſider, and apply; and the Lord make you good Husbands for your own ſouls.

THE

THE FIRST PART OF HUSBANDRY Spiritualized.

CHAP. I.

In the laborious Husbandman you ſee,
What all true Chriſtians are, or ought to be.

Upon the induſtry of the Husbandman.

OBSERVATION.

THE imployment of the Hsbandman is by all acknowledged, to be very laborious; there is a multiplicity of buſineſs incumbent on him. The end of one work, is but the beginning of another. Every ſeaſon of the year brings its proper work with it: Sometimes you find him in his *Fields*, dreſſing, plowing, ſowing, harrowing, weeding, or reaping; and ſometimes in his *Barn*, threſhing, or winnowing; ſometimes

times in his *Orchard*, planting, graffing, or pruning his trees, and ſometimes among his *Cattel*: ſo that he hath no time to be idle. And as he hath a multiplicity of buſineſs, ſo every part of it is full of toyl, and ſpending labour: He eats not the bread of idleneſs, but earns it before he eats it; and as it were, dips it in his own ſweat, whereby it becomes the ſweeter to him. Though ſin brought in the Husbandmans ſweat, *Gen.*3.19. yet now not to ſweat would increaſe his ſin, *Ezek.* 16. 49.

APPLICATION.

BEhold here the life of a ſerious Chriſtian, ſhadowed forth to the life. As the life of a Husbandman, ſo the life of a Chriſtian is no idle, or eaſie life. They that take up Religion for *oſtentation*, and not for an *occupation*; and thoſe that place the buſineſs of it in notions, and idle ſpeculations, in forms, geſtures, and external obſervances, may think, and call it ſo: but ſuch as devote themſelves unto it, and make Religion their buſineſs, will find it no eaſie work to exerciſe themſelves to godlineſs. Many there are, that affect the reputation and *ſweet* of it, who cannot endure the labour, and *ſweat* of it. If men might be indulged to divide their hearts betwixt God and the World, or to cull out the cheap and eaſie duties of it, and neglect the more difficult and coſtly ones, it were an eaſie thing to be a Chriſtian: but ſurely to have reſpect to all God's commandments, to live the life, as well as ſpeak, the language of a Chriſtian; to be holy in all manner of converſation, is not ſo eaſie. This will be evident, by comparing the life of a Chriſtian, with the life of a Husbandman, in theſe five particulars: Wherein it will appear that the work of a Chriſtian, is by much the hardeſt work of the two.

1. The Husbandman hath much to do, many things to look after; but the Chriſtian more: If we reſpect the extenſiveneſs of his work, he hath a large field indeed to labour in, *Pſal.* 119. 96. *The commandment is exceeding broad*; of a vaſt extent and latitude, comprizing not only a multitude of external

ternal acts, and duties, and guiding the Offices of the outward man about them, but alſo taking in every thought and motion of the inner man within its compaſs.

You find in the Word, a world of work cut out for Chriſtians; there's hearing work, praying work, reading, meditating, and ſelf-examining work; it puts him alſo upon a conſtant watch over all the corruptions of his heart. Oh, what a world of work hath a Chriſtian about them? For of them he may ſay, as the *Hiſtorian* doth of *Hannibal*, They are never quiet, whether conquering, or conquered. How many weak languiſhing graces hath he to recover, improve, and ſtrengthen? There is a weak faith, a languiſhing love, dull and faint deſires to be quickned and invigorated. And when all this is done, what a multitude of work do his ſeveral relations exact from him? he hath a world of buſineſs incumbent on him, as a parent, child, husband, wife, maſter, ſervant, or friend; yea, not only to friends, but enemies. And beſide all this, how many difficult things are there to be born and ſuffered for Chriſt? and yet will not God allow his people in the neglect of any one of them: neither can he be a Chriſtian that hath not reſpect to every command, and is not holy, in all manner of converſation, *Pſal.* 119. 6. 2 *Pet.* 3. 11. every one of theſe duties, like the ſeveral ſpokes in a wheel come to bear in the whole round of a Chriſtians converſation: ſo that he hath more work upon his hands than the Husbandman.

2. The Husbandman's work is confeſſed to be Spending work, but not like the Chriſtians. What *Auguſtus* ſaid of the young *Roman*, is verified in the true Chriſtian, *Quicquid vult valde vult.* Whatſoever he doth in Religion, he doth to purpoſe. Under the Law, God rejected the *Snail* and the *Aſs*, Levit. 11. 30. *Exod.* 13. 13. And under the Goſpel, he allows no ſluggiſh lazy Profeſſor, 1 *Tim.* 5. 11, 13. Sleepy duties are utterly unſuitable to the living God; he will have the very ſpirits diſtilled and offered up to him in every duty, *Joh.* 4. 24. he beſtows upon his people the very ſubſtance and kernel of mercies, and will not accept from them the ſhells and ſhadows of duties; not the skin,

but the inwards, and the fat that covereth the inwards, was required under the Law, *Exod.* 29. 30. And every ſacrifice under the Goſpel, muſt be *ſacrificium medullatum*, a ſacrifice full of marrow; obſerve the manner in which their work is to be performed.

Rom. 12. 11. in ſerving God, fervent in ſpirit, or hiſſing hot.

2 *Pet.* 1. 10. in ſecuring ſalvation, diligent; or doing it throughly, and enough.

1 *Tim.* 4. 7. in godlineſs, exerciſing, or ſtripping themſelves, as for a race.

Luke 13. 24. in the purſuit of happineſs, ſtriving, even to an agony.

Act. 26. 7. in prayer, ſerving God inſtantly; or in a ſtretched-out manner; yea, pouring out their hearts before him, *Pſal.* 62. 8. as if the body were left like a dead corps upon the knees, whilſt the ſpirit is departed from it, and aſcended to God. This is the manner of his work: judge then how much harder this work is, than to ſpend the ſweat of the brow in manual labour.

3. The Husbandman finds his work as he left it, he can begin one day, where he left the other; but it is not ſo with the Chriſtian, a bad heart, and a buſie devil, diſorder and ſpoyl his work every day. The Chriſtian finds not his heart in the morning, as he left it at night; and even when he is about his work, how many ſet-backs doth he meet with? Satan ſtands at his right hand (the working hand) to reſiſt him, *Zech.* 3. 1. when he would do good, evil (the evil of his own heart and nature) is preſent with him.

4. The Husbandman hath ſome reſting days, when he throws aſide all his work, and takes his recreation; but the Chriſtian hath no reſting day, till his dying day; and then he ſhall reſt from his labours. Religion allows no idle dayes, *but requires him to be always abounding in the work of the Lord*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. When one duty is done, another calls for him; the Lord's day is a day of reſt to the Husbandman; but no day in the week ſo laborious to the Chriſtian. O 'tis a ſpending day to him. When he hath gathered in the crop of one

one duty; he is not to ſit down ſatisfied therewith, or ſay as that rich worldling did, *Luke* 12. 19. *Soul take thine eaſe, thou haſt goods laid up for many years*, but muſt to plow again, and count it well if the Vintage reach to the ſeed-time, *Lev.* 26.5. I mean, if the ſtrength, influence, and comforts of one duty, hold out to another duty; and that it may be ſo, and there be no room left for idleneſs, God hath appointed ejaculatory prayer, to fill up the intervals, betwixt ſtated and the more ſolemn duties. Theſe are to keep in the fire, which kindled the morning ſacrifice, to kindle the evening ſacrifice. When can the Chriſtian ſit down and ſay, now all my work is ended, I have nothing to do, without doors, or within?

Laſtly, There is a time when the labour of the Husbandman is ended; old age and weakneſs takes him off from all imployment; they can only look upon their labourers, but cannot do a ſtroke of work themſelves; they can tell you what they did in their younger years, but now (ſay they) we muſt leave it to younger people; we cannot be young always: but the Chriſtian is never ſuper-annuated as to the work of Religion; yea, the longer he lives, the more his Maſter expects from him. When he is full of dayes, God expects he ſhould be full of fruits, *Pſal.* 9. 14. *They ſhall bring forth fruit in old age, they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. The worldlings Reflection.

HOw hard have I laboured for the meat that periſheth? prevented the dawning of the day, and laboured as in the very fire, and yet is the Chriſtians work harder than mine? Surely then, I never yet underſtood the work of Chriſtianity. Alas! my ſleepy prayers, and formal duties, even all that ever I performed in my life, never coſt me that pains, that one hour at plow hath done. I have either wholly neglected, or at beſt, ſo lazily performed religious duties, that I may truly ſay, I offer to God what coſt me nothing. Wo is me poor wretch! How is the judgment of *Corah* ſpiritually executed upon me? The earth opened her mouth, and ſwallowed

lowed up his body, but it hath opened its mouth and ſwallowed up my heart, my time, and all my affections. How far am I from the Kingdom of God!

2. The Formaliſts Reflection.

And how little better is my caſe, who have indeed profeſſed Religion, but never made it my buſineſs? Will an empty (though ſplendid) profeſſion ſave me? How many brave Ships have periſhed in the ſtorms, notwithſtanding their fine names, the *Proſperous*, the *Succeſs*, the *Happy return*? A fine name could not protect them from the rocks, nor will it ſave me from hell. I have done by Religion, as I ſhould have done by the world; prayed, as if I prayed not; and heard as if I heard not. I have given to God but the ſhadow of duty, and can never expect from him a real reward.

3. The Reflection of a ſlothful Chriſtian.

How unlike a Chriſtian doſt thou alſo (O my ſoul) go about thy work; though upright in the main, yet how little zeal and activity doſt thou expreſs in thy duties? Awake love and zeal, ſeeſt thou not the toyl and pains men take for the world? how do they prevent the dawning of the day? and labour as in the very fire till night; and all this for a trifle! ſhould not every drop of ſweat which I ſee trickle from their brows, fetch (as it were) a drop of blood from my heart? who am thus convinced and reproved of ſhameful lazineſs, by their indefatigable diligence. Do they pant after the duſt of the earth? *Amos* 2.7. and ſhall not I pant after God? *Pſal.* 42. 1. Ah, my ſoul! It was not wont to be ſo with thee, in the dayes of my firſt profeſſion. Should I have had no more communion with God in duties then, it would have broken my heart: I ſhould have been weary of my life. Is this a time for one to ſtand idle, who ſtands at the door of eternity? What, now ſlack-handed, when ſo neer to my everlaſting reſt! *Rom.* 13. 11. or haſt thou found the work of God ſo unpleaſant to thee? *Prov.* 3. 17. or the trade of godlineſs ſo unprofitable? *Pſal.* 19. 11. Or knoweſt thou not, that millions now in hell periſhed for want of ſerious diligence in Religion? *Luke* 13. 34. or doth my diligence for God, anſwer to that which *Chriſt* hath done and ſuffered, to purchaſe my happineſs? or to the preparations he hath made in heaven for me? or doſt thou forget that thy Maſters

Maſters eye is alwayes upon thee, whilſt thou art lazing and loytering? or would the damned live at this rate, as I do, if their day of grace might be recalled? for ſhame (my ſoul) for ſhame! rouze up thy ſelf, and fall to thy work, with a diligence anſwerable to the weight thereof: for it is no vain work concerning thee, it is thy life.

The *Poem.*

Religion	WHEN advanc'd in power,	
Will make you	HUSBAND every hour.	Eph. 5. 15.
'Twill make	MEN ſtrive with all their might,	
And therein	FIND a ſweet delight.	Luke 13. 24.
If there were	NOUGHT beſides that pay,	Pſal. 119. 47.
Chriſt gives	TO cheer us in our way;	Pſal. 19. 9.
Should we not	DO the beſt we can?	
For there's	NO ſuch reward from man.	Pſal. 73. 25.
Shall others	WORK, and not regard	Amos 2. 7.
Their ſtrength;	TO get a ſmall reward?	Eccleſ. 6. 7.
Whilſt we	TURN ſlugs, and loyter thus?	
Oh that	THEIR zeal might quicken us!	Pſal. 4. 6.
Why are our	HANDS, and feet ſo ſlow,	Rom. 12. 11.
When we	UNTO our buſineſs go?	
How can we	THEN Chriſt's pay expect,	Gal. 6. 16.
And yet the	CHRISTIANS work reject?	
If this, then	ALSO that embrace	Heb. 12. 24.
Them both:	IF not, we both diſgrace.	
Some if	THEY could theſe two divide,	Mat. 20. 21, 22.
T'would	PLEASE them well, with Chriſt to ſide,	
But if they	MAY not, then it were	Mat. 19. 22.
As good	CEASE pleading, they'l not hear.	
Rouze up	FROM ſloth, (my ſoul) betake	Gal. 6. 9.
Thee to thy	WORK, no cavils make.	
O ſtrive,	AND try! Saints ſay that even	Luke 13. 24.
The pain they	TAKE, hath much of heaven.	Pſal. 19. 10.
But yet	THEIR beſt wine's kept till laſt,	Joh. 20. 10.
Their reſt, and	EASE comes all ſo faſt.	Heb. 4. *ult.*

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The hardeſt labourers, are the thriving men.
If you'l have thriving ſouls, be active then.

OBSERVATION.

Upon the thriftineſs of the Husbandman.

INduſtry and diligence is the way to thrive and grow rich in the world. The earth muſt be manured, or its increaſe is in vain expected; *Qui fugit molam, fugit farinam*; he that refuſes the mill, refuſes the meal, (ſaith the Proverb) the diligent ſoul ſhall be made fat. *Solomon* hath two proverbs concerning thriftineſs and increaſe in the world. In *Prov.* 10.4. he ſaith, *The hand of the diligent maketh rich.* And *v.* 22. he ſaith, *The bleſſing of the Lord maketh rich.* Theſe are not *contradictory*, but *confirmatory* each of other; one ſpeaks of the *principal*, the other of the *inſtrumental* cauſe. Diligence without Gods bleſſing will not do it; and that bleſſing cannot be expected without diligence; therefore Husbandmen ply their buſineſs with unwearied pains, they do even lodge in the midſt of their labours, as that good Husband *Boaz* did, *Ruth* 2.3. they are *parſimonious* of their time, but *prodigal* of their ſweat and ſtrength, becauſe they find this to be the thriving way.

APPLICATION.

Non mercurii ſed operarii.

AS nature opens her treaſures to none but the diligent, ſo neither doth grace. He that will be *rich*, muſt be a *painful* Chriſtian; and whoſoever will cloſly ply the trade of godlineſs, ſhall comfortably and quickly find, *That in keeping Gods commands there is great reward*, Pſal. 19. 11. God is a *bountiful rewarder of ſuch as diligently ſeek him*, Heb. 11.6. They muſt not indeed work for wages, nor yet will God ſuffer their work to go unrewarded; yea, it ſufficiently rewards it ſelf, 1 *Tim.* 6. 6. and its reward is twofold, (1) preſent, and in part; (2) future and in full, *Mark* 10.29,30. Now in this time an hundred-fold, even from ſuffering, which ſeems the moſt unprofitable part of the work, and in the world to come, life everlaſting. If you ask what preſent advantage

advantage Chriſtians have by their diligence? I anſwer, as much and more than the Husbandman hath from all his toyls and labours. Let us compare the particulars, and ſee what the Husbandman gets, that the Chriſtian gets not alſo. Compare your gains, and you'l quickly ſee the odds.

You get credit and reputation by your diligence; 'tis a commendation and honour to you, to be active and ſtirring men: But how much more honour doth God put upon his laborious ſervants? 'Tis the higheſt honour of a creature, to be active and uſeful for its God. Saints are called *veſſels of honour*, as they are fitted for the Maſters uſe, 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. Wherein conſiſts the honour of *Angels*, but in this; that they are miniſtring ſpirits, ſerviceable creatures? And all the *Apoſtles* gloried in the title of ſervants. The loweſt office in which a man can ſerve God, even that of a *Nethinim*, or door-keeper, which was the loweſt order or rank of officers in the houſe of God, *Ezek.* 44. 10, 11. is yet preferred by *David* before the ſervice of the greateſt Prince on earth, *Pſal.* 84. 10. 'Tis no ſmall honour to be active for God. 1.

You have this benefit by your labour, that thereby you avoid looſe and evil company, which would draw you into miſchief. By diligence for God, the Chriſtian alſo is ſecured from temptations; *God is with them, while they are with him*, 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. Communion with God in the way of duty, is a great preſervative againſt temptations. The *School-men* put the queſtion, how the Angels and glorified Saints become impeccant? and reſolve it thus: That they are ſecured from ſin, by the beatifical Viſion; and ſure I am, that the Viſions of God, not only in glory, but now alſo in duty, are marvellous defences againſt ſin; and they that are moſt active for God, have the fulleſt and cleareſt viſions of God, *Joh.* 14. 21. 2.

You have this benefit by your labour, that it tends much to the health of your bodies. The Chriſtian hath this benefit by his labour, that it tends to a faithful ſtate of ſoul; *The way of the Lord is ſtrength to the upright*, Prov. 10. 29. As thoſe that follow their daily labours in the field, have much more health than Citizens that live idly, or Scholars that 3.

live a ſedentary life. So the active Chriſtian enjoys more ſpiritual health, and is troubled with fewer complaints than others.

4. By diligence in your civil imployments, you preſerve your eſtates, and are kept from running behind-hand in the world. *Bayliffs* trouble not ſuch mens doors; they uſually have the fore-foot of their neighbours. And by activity and diligence for God, ſouls are kept from backſliding, and runing back in their graces and comforts. Remiſſions and intermiſſions in our duties, are the firſt ſteps and degrees by which a ſoul declines and waſtes, as to his ſpiritual eſtate.

5. Your pains and diligence in the fields, makes your beds ſweet to you at night, *Eccl.* 5. 12. *Reſt is ſweet to a labouring man, whether he eat little or much.* But the diligent life of a Chriſtian makes the clods of the valley, his grave ſweet unto him, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. 2 *King.* 20. 3. *Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before thee*, &c. Think Chriſtian, how ſweet it will be for thee when thou comeſt to dye; to ſay then as thy Redeemer did, when near his death, *Joh.* 17. 4, 5. *I have finiſhed the work thou gaveſt me to do; and now, O Father, glorifie me with thine own ſelf.*

6. The expence of your ſweat fills your purſes, you get eſtates by your diligence and labour; but what are your gains to the gains of Chriſtians? They can get in an hour, that which they will not part with for all the gold and ſilver on earth, *Prov.* 3. 14.

So that compare theſe labourers as to all their advantages, and you ſhall ſee, that there is no trade like that which the diligent Chriſtian drives.

REFLECTIONS.

2. Reflections of the ſlothful ſoul.

Bluſh then, O my ſoul, at the conſideration of thy lazineſs and ſloth, which is attended with ſo many ſpiritual wants! and can I wonder at it, when I refuſe the painful way of duty, in which the precious fruits of Godlineſs, are only to be found? If theſe fruits lay upon the ſurface of duty, or could be had with wiſhes, I ſhould not want them; but to dig deep

deep and take pains I cannot. My deſires, like thoſe of the ſloathful man, kill me, *becauſe my hands refuſe to labour*, Pro. 21. 25. If every duty were to be rewarded preſently with gold, would I not have been more aſſiduous in them, than I have been? And yet I know that a heart full of the grace and comfort of the holy Ghoſt, is better than a houſe full of gold and ſilver. O what a compoſition of ſtupidity and ſloth am I! I have been all for the ſhort cut to comfort, when conſtant experience teacheth, that the farther way about, by painful duty, is the neareſt way to it. What pains do Huſbandmen take? what perils do Seamen run, for a little gain? O ſluggiſh heart! wilt thou do nothing for eternal treaſures?

2. Secondly, if there be ſuch great rewards attending diligence in duty, then why art thou ſo apt (O my ſoul) to caſt off duty, becauſe thou findeſt not preſent comfort in it? how quickly am I diſcouraged, if I preſently find not what I expect in duty? Whereas, the Well is deep, and much pains muſt be taken to draw up thoſe waters of joy, *Iſa.* 12. 3. there is a golden vein in the mount of duty, but it lyes deep; and becauſe I meet not with it as ſoon as I expect, my lazy heart throws by the ſhovel, and cryes, Dig I cannot.

3. The worldlings Reflection. Thirdly, if this be indeed the rich and thriving trade, why do I peddle about the poor low things of the world ſo much, neglecting the rich trade of godlineſs for it? O, how much of my time and ſtrength have theſe things devoured? Had I imployed that time in communion with God, would it not have turn'd to a better account? Think'ſt thou in earneſt, O my ſoul, that God hath indowed thee with ſuch excellent faculties, capable of the moſt divine and heavenly imployments, or that Jeſus Chriſt hath ſhed his invaluably precious bloud, or that he hath ſent forth the glorious ſpirit of holineſs, and all this to fit men for no higher or nobler imployments than theſe?

Is this the end of thy wonderful creation? Doth God whirl about the heavens in endleſs revolutions, to beget time for this? or doth he not rather expect that the weightieſt work ſhould engroſs thy greateſt ſtrength, and choiceſt hours? O, that I could once conſider, what a good Maſter

Chriſtians ſerve, who will not only abundantly reward them at night; but brings them their food into the field to incourage them in their labour! What pity is it, that ſo good a Maſter ſhould be ſo badly ſerved as he hath been by me! Heark, how he pleads to gain my heart.

The *POEM*, by way of Dialogue betwixt Chriſt and the world.

CHRIST.

John 6. 27. 1 Cor. 7. 31. Mat. 16. 26.

O Why ſo free of ſweat and time?
For what e're long will not be thine.
Or if it might, thou ſell'ſt to loſs,
A precious ſoul for laſting droſs.
Thoſe weary hands, and toyling brains,
Might be imploy'd for better gains.
Wouldſt thou but work as hard for me,
As for the world, which cozens *thee?*
Thy gains ſhould be a thouſand fold:
For my revenues more then gold.

1 Tim. 6. 6.

Mark 4. 19.

Prov. 8. 19.

WORLD.

Soul, I have alwayes found thee willing;
Rather by me to earn a ſhilling;
Than truſt uncertain things which lye,
Beyond thee in eternity.
Shall things unſeen now tempt thee? tuſh,
A bird in hand's worth two i'th buſh:
I pay thy wages down in hand,
This thou canſt feel, taſte, underſtand.
O let not ſuch a vain pretence,
Prevail againſt thy very ſence.

CHRIST.

CHRIST.

Thus beaſts are led, thus birds are ſnar'd, Job 35. 11.
Thus ſouls for ruine are prepar'd. Eccleſ. 11. 9.
What? truſt no farther then you ſee, John 20. 29.
You'l truſt a thief as far as me.
Deluded wretch, will naught but fight
And ſence convince thee? O how right 2 Tim. 3. 13.
How juſt is God? whoſe direful ſcourge Rom. 2. 5.
Such Arguments in hell ſhall urge. Mark 6. 16.

WORLD.

Chriſt threatens wrath to come, but I
Do threaten thee with poverty.
And why wilt thou thy ſelf, and thoſe
That are ſo dear, to want expoſe?
Come, ſee the Saints; for all their brags:
How well they thrive, they'r cloath'd with rags.

CHRIST.

If my dear Saints in rags do go, 1 Tim. 4. 8.
'Tis not Religion cloaths them ſo; 1 Cor. 1. 28, 29.
But by ſuch wants the Lord prepares 1 Tim. 6. 9.
Their ſouls, againſt thy killing ſnares,
They all are heirs, though under age; James 2. 5.
Expectants of their heritage. Jude 21.
Kept ſhort for preſent, yet contemn
A change with thoſe that ſcoff at them. Pſal. 17. 13, 14.

WORLD.

It is in vain to plead, for I
With preſent things charm powerfully.
What e're thou offer'ſt, they'l deſpiſe;
I hold them priſoners by their eyes.

CHRIST.

CHRIST.

Luke 19. 27. Isa. 30. 8, 9. Jude 5. 2 Pet. 3, 7.

If they will ſerve no other Lord,
Then let it ſtand upon record
Againſt their ſouls that they refus'd
My wages, and my grace abus'd.
Remember this when they ſhall ſee
All turn'd to aſhes that's in thee.

ANOTHER.

NOne will deny, but thoſe are bleſſed pains,
Which are attended with the richeſt gains.
Grant this, and then moſt clearly 'tis inferr'd,
Soul-work to all deſerves to be preferr'd.
This is an unknown trade, Oh, who can count,
To what the gains of godlineſs amount?
For one poor ſhilling, O, what reſks ſome run?
Some toyling as i'th fire, from Sun to Sun!
Whereas one hour ſpent with God brings in
Such heavenly treaſures, that poor ſouls have been
Inrich'd for ever. Even as you ſee
A Princes Favourite upon the knee,
Can in an hours time more wealth obtain,
Than all your lives by labour you can gain.
Prayer gains are great, and quick returns are made,
Sure then the Chriſtian drives the richeſt trade.
'Tis true, the hypocrite that never drove
A ſerious trade for heaven may bankrupt prove;
But holy ſouls which mind, and cloſely ply
Their buſineſs, greatly are enrich'd thereby.
The difference 'twixt the one, and t'others beſt
By ſuch a Simile as this expreſt.
As in a Summers day you often ſee,
The wanton Butterfly and painful Bee;

On

On fragrant flowers fix, whence one doth ſtrive
To bear his precious burden to the Hive:
The others pains no profit with it brings,
His time is ſpent in painting of his wings.
When Winter comes, the Bee hath full ſupplies,
The other creeps into an hole and dyes.
Like different events ſhall be betwixt
The painful Saint, and lazy Notioniſt.

CHAP. III.

Upon the cheerfulneſs of the Husbandman.

The Plowman ſings and whiſtles though he ſweat,
Shall Chriſtians droop, becauſe their work is great?

OBSERVATION.

THough the labours of Husbandmen are very great and toylſom, yet with what cheerfulneſs do they go through them? It is very delightful to hear the melody they make by whiſtling, as they follow the Plow; yea, the very horſes have their Bells, which make a pleaſant noiſe. *Horſes* (ſaith Mr. *Fuller*) *will do more for a whiſtle, than a whip*; and their Bells do as it were, gingle away their wearineſs. I have been often delighted with this Country muſick, whereby they ſweeten their hard labours with an innocent pleaſure, and verifie the ſaying of the Poet:

Ovid. *Tempus in agrorum cultu conſumere dulce eſt.*
Although they plow from morning until night.
Time ſteals away with pleaſure and delight.

APPLICATION.

BUt how much greater cauſe have the people of God to addreſs themſelves unto his work, with all cheerfulneſs of ſpirit? And indeed, ſo far as the heart is ſpiritual, it delights

lights in its duties. 'Tis true, the work of a Chriſtian is painful, and much more ſpending than the Husbandmans (as was opened *Chap.* 1.) but then it as much exceeds in the delights and pleaſures that attend it. What is the Chriſtians work, but *with joy to draw water out of the wells of ſalvation? Iſa.* 12. 3. You may ſee what a pleaſant path the path of duty is, by the cheerfulneſs of thoſe that have walked in them, *Pſal.* 119. 14. *I have rejoyced in the way of thy judgment, as much as in all riches.* And by the promiſes that are made to ſuch, *Pſal.* 138. 5. *Yea, they ſhall ſing in the ways of the Lord, for great is the glory of the Lord.* And again, *You ſhall have a ſong as in the night, when an holy ſolemnity is kept, and gladneſs of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe, to come to the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty one of Iſrael*, Iſa. 30. 29.

And laſtly, by the many commands, whereby joy in the wayes of the Lord is made the duty of the Saints. *Rejoyce in the Lord, ye righteous, for praiſe is comely for the upright*, Pſa. 97. 12. *Rejoyce, and again I ſay rejoyce.* Phil. 4. 4. Where the command is doubled; yea, not only ſimple rejoycing, but the higheſt degree of that duty comes within the command, *Pſal.* 132. 9, 16. *Shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.* And *Luke* 6. 22, 23. they are bid, *to leap for joy*, when about the difficult'ſt part of their work, and that you may ſee there is ſufficient ground for it, and that it is not like the mad mirth of ſinners, be pleaſed to conſider,

1. The nature of the work about which they are employed; it is the moſt excellent and heavenly employment that ever ſouls were acquainted with. O what a raviſning and delightſome thing it is, to walk with God! and yet by this, the whole work of a Chriſtian is expreſſed, *Gen.* 17. 1. Can any life compare with this for pleaſure? Can they be chill, that walk in the Sun-ſhine? or ſad, that abide in the fountain of all delights? and walk with him whoſe name is the God of all comfort, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. *In whoſe preſence is the fulneſs of joy*, Pſal. 16. 11. O what an Angelical life doth a Chriſtian then live!

2. Or (2ly.) If we conſider the variety of ſpiritual imployments, *varietas delectat.* Change of employment, takes off the

the tediouſneſs of Labour. Variety of voices pleaſe the ear: variety of colours delight the eye; the ſame meat prepared ſeveral wayes, pleaſes the palate more, and clogs it leſs. But O the variety of choice diſhes wherewith God entertains his people in a Sabbath! as the Word, Prayer, Sacraments, &c. *Iſa.* 58. 13. If thou call the Sabbath thy delights; or as *Tremelius* renders it, thy delicate things. *My ſoul* (ſaith *David*) *ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs*, Pſal. 63. 5.

Or, laſtly, if we conſider the ſuitableneſs of this work, to a regenerate ſoul. Is it any pain for a bird to flye? or a fiſh to ſwim? Is the eye tired with beautiful objects? or the ear with melodious ſounds? As little can a ſpiritual ſoul be wearied with ſpiritual and heavenly exerciſes, *Rom.* 7. 22. *I delight in the Law of God, after the inner man. Gravia non gravitant in eorum loco* (ſaith the *Philoſopher*) weighty things are not heavy in their own element, or center. And ſurely, God is the center of all gracious ſpirits. A Saint can ſit from morning to night to hear diſcourſes of the love and loveline ſs of Jeſus Chriſt. The ſight of your thriving flocks and flouriſhing fields, cannot yield you that pleaſure which an upright ſoul can find in one quarter of an hours communion with God. *They that are after the fleſh* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Rom.* 8. 5.) *do mind the things of the fleſh, and they that are after the ſpirit, the things of the ſpirit.* But then, look how much heavenly objects tranſcend earthly ones, and how much the ſoul is more capable of delight in thoſe objects, than the groſs and duller ſenſes are in theirs; ſo much doth the pleaſure ariſing from the duty, excel all ſenſitive delights on earth. 3.

REFLECTIONS.

The carnal hearts Reflection.

How am I caſt and condemned by this, may I ſay; who never ſavoured this ſpiritual delight in holy duties. When I am about my earthly employments; I can go on unweariedly, from day to day; all the way is down hill to my nature: and the wheels of my affections being oyled with carnal delight, run ſo faſt, that they have need moſt times of trigging. Here I rather need the curb, than the ſpur. O, how fleet and nim-

ble are my ſpirits, in theſe their purſuits! But O, what a ſlug am I in religious duties! Sure if my heart were renewed by grace, I ſhould delight in the law of God, *Rom.* 7. 22. All the world is alive in their wayes, every creature injoyes his proper pleaſure; and is there no delight to be found in the paths of holineſs? Is godlineſs only a dry root, that bears no pleaſant fruits? No, no, there are doubtleſs incomparable pleaſures to be found therein: but ſuch a carnal heart as mine ſavours them not.

The hypocrites. Reflection.

I cannot ſay, but I have found delight in Religious duties but they have been only ſuch as rather ſprang from the oſtentation of gifts and applauſes of men, than any ſweet and real communion I have had with God through them; they have rather proved food and fewel to my pride, than food to my ſoul. Like the Nightingale I can ſing ſweetly, when I obſerve others to liſten to me, and be affected with my muſick. O, falſe deceitful heart, ſuch delight as this will end in howling! were my ſpirit right, it would as much delight in retirements for the enjoyment of God, as it doth in thoſe duties that are moſt expoſed to the obſervation of man. Wilt ſuch a ſpring as this maintain a ſtream of affections; when carnal motives fail? What wilt thou anſwer (O my ſoul) to that queſtion, *Job* 27. 9, 10. *Will God hear his cry when trouble comes upon him? Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty? Will he alwayes call upon God?* What wilt thou reply to this queſtion? Deceive not thou thy ſelf, O my ſoul! thou wilt doubtleſs be eaſily perſwaded to let go that thou never delightedſt in; and from an hypocrite in Religion, quickly become an Apoſtate from Religion.

The upright hearts Reflection.

From all this, the upright heart takes advantage to rouze up its delight in God, and thus it expoſtulateth with it ſelf: Doth the Plowman ſing amidſt his drudging labours, and whiſtle away his wearineſs in the fields, and ſhall I droop amidſt ſuch heavenly imployment? O my ſoul, what want'ſt thou here, to provoke thy delight? if there be ſuch an affection as delight in thee, methinks, ſuch an object, as the bleſſed face of God in Ordinances ſhould excite it. Ah, how would this ennoble all my ſervices, and make them Angel-

like!

like! how glad are thoſe bleſſed creatures to be imployed for God? No ſooner were they created, but they ſang together, and ſhouted for joy, *Job* 38. 7. How did they fil the Aire with heavenly melody, when ſent to bring the joyful tydings of a Saviour to the world? Aſcribing glory to God in the higheſt, even to the higheſt of their powers: yea, this delight would make all my duties Chriſt-like; and the nearer that pattern, the more excellent. He delighted to do his Fathers will, it was to him meat and drink, *Pſal.* 40. 7 *John* 4. 32, 34.

Yea, it would not only ennoble, but facilitate all my duties, and be to me as wings to a bird flying, or ſailes to a a Ship in motion, *Non tardat unctа rota*; oyled wheels run freely; *Or ever I was aware, my ſoulmade me like the chariots of Aminadab.* O, what is the reaſon (my God) my delight in thee ſhould be ſo little? Is it not, becauſe my unbeliet is ſo great? Rouze up my delights, O thou fountain of pleaſure! and let me ſwim down the ſtream of holy joyes in duty, into the boundleſs Ocean of thoſe immenſe delights that are in thy preſence, and at thy right hand for evermore.

The *Poem.*

O What a (1) dull, deſpondent heart is mine?
That takes no more (2) delight in things divine,
When all the Creatures both in heaven and earth:
Enjoy their (3) pleaſures, and are big with mirth.
(4) Angels and Saints that are before the Throne;
In extaſies, and raptures every one.
Perpetually is held: Each bleſſed ſpirit
The pureſt (5) higheſt joyes; doth there inherit.
The Saints on earth, in their imperfect ſtate;
Thoſe Peerleſs joyes by (6) faith do antedate.
To natural men, who favour not this pleaſure;
Yet bounteous nature doth unlock her treaſure
Of (7) ſenſitive delights, Yea, ſtrange to tell;
Bold ſinners (8) rant it all the way to hell.

(1) Iſa. 68. 7.
(2) Pſ. 94. 19.
(3) Pſ. 145. 10.
(4) Rev. 5. 11, 12, 13.
(5) Mat. 25. 21.
(6) 1 Pet. 1. 8, 9.
(7) Act. 14. 17.
(8) Job. 21. 11

Like fiſh that play in *Jordans* ſilver ſtream;
So theſe in ſenſual luſts: and never dream
Of that dead Sea, to which the ſtream doth tend:
(9) Jam. 5. 18. And to their pleaſures puts a (9) fatal end.
(1) Pſ. 10. 4. 12. Yea (1) birds, and (2) beaſts as well as men, enjoy
(2) Pſ. 104 11. Their innocent delights. Theſe Chirp and play;
The cheerful birds among the branches ſing,
And make the neighboring groves with muſick ring.
With various warbling notes they all invite,
Our raviſht ears, with pleaſure and delight.
(3) Pſ. 11. 4. 6. The new faln Lambs (3) willin a Sun-ſhine day,
About their feeeding dams jump up and play
(4) Jer. 2. 13. Are (4) Ciſterns ſweet? and is the fountain bitter?
Or can the Sun be dark, when glow-worms glitter?
(5) Iſa. 30. 29. Have (5) inſtruments, their ſweet melodious airs?
All creatures their delights, and Saints not theirs?
(6) Pſal. 4. 7. Yea, theirs (6) tranſcend theſe ſenſual ones, as far;
As noon day *Phebus* doth a twinkling ſtar,
Why droop I then, may any creature have
A Life like mine for pleaſure? Who ere gave
The like (7) encouragement that Chriſt hath given,
(7) Joh. 15. 11. To do his will on earth, as 'tis in heaven?

CHAP. IV.

Upon the due quality of arable Land.

Corn Land muſt neither be too fat, nor poor?
The middle ſtate ſuits beſt with Chriſtians ſure.

OBSERVATION.

Husbandmen find by experience, that their arable Lands may be dreſt too much, as well as too little. If the ſoil be over rank, the ſeed ſhoots up ſo much into the ſtalk, that it ſeldome ears well; and if too thin and poor, it wants its due nutriment, and comes not to perfection. Therefore their care is to keep it in heart, but not to overdreſs or underdreſs

derdreſs its. The end of all their coſt and paines about it is fruit; and therefore reaſon tells them, that ſuch a ſtate and temperament of it, as beſt fits it for fruit, is beſt both for it and them.

APPLICATION.

AND doth not ſpiritual experience teach Chriſtians, that a mediocrity and competency of the things of this life, beſt fits them for the fruits of obedience, which is the end and excellency of their beings? A man may be overmercied as well as over afflicted. *Rare fumant fœlicibus aræ*, the altars of the rich ſeldome ſmoke. When our outward injoyments are by providence ſhaped and fitted to our condition, as a ſuit is to the body, that fits cloſe and neat, neither too curt nor long; we cannot deſire a better condition in this world. This was it that wiſe *Agur* requeſted of God. *Prov.* 30. 8, 9. *Give me neither Poverty nor Riches, but feed me with food convenient for me, leaſt I be full and deny thee, and ſay who is the Lord, or leſt I be poor and ſteal, and take the name of my God in vain.* Againſt both he prayes *equally*, not *abſolutely*; that had been his ſin, but comparatively and ſubmiſſively to the will of God. He had rather, if God ſee it fit, to avoid both theſe extreams; but what would he have then? Why food convenient. Or, according to the *Hebrew*, give me my prey or ſtature bread; which is a Metaphor from birds that flye up and down to prey for their young, and what they get they diſtribute among them; they bring them enough to preſerve their lives, but not more than enough to lye mouldering in the neſt. Such a proportion *Agur* deſired; and the reaſon why he deſired it, is drawn from the danger of both the extreams. He meaſured (like a wiſe Chriſtian) the conveniency or inconveniency of his eſtate in the world, by its ſuitableneſs or unſuitableneſs to the end of his being; which is the ſervice of God. He accounted the true excellency of his life to conſiſt in its reference and tendency to the glory of his God; and he could not ſee how a *redundancy* or too great a *penury* of earthly comforts, could fit him for that, but a middle eſtate equally

equally removed from both extreams, beſt fitted that end. And this was all that good *Jacob*, who was led by the ſame ſpirit lookt at, *Gen.* 28. 20. *And* Jacob *vowed a vow ſaying, if God will be with me, and keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and rayment to put on ſo that I come again to my fathers houſe in peace then ſhall the Lord be my God.* Poor *Jacob*, he deſires no great matters in the world, food and rayment will ſatisfie him; in ſpiritual things his deſires are boundleſs; he is the moſt greedie and unſatisfied man in the world, *Hoſ.* 12. 4. but in the matters of this life, if he can get from God but *offam & aquam*, a morſel of meat, and a mouth full of water, he will not envy the richeſt *Cræſus* or *Craſſus* upon earth. Meat and drink are the riches of Chriſtians, *Divitiæ ſunt adlegem natura compoſita paupertas* (ſaith *Pomponius Attius*) riches are ſuch a poverty or mediocrity as hath enough for natures uſes; and ſuch a ſtate is beſt accommodated, both to the condition and to the deſires of a Saint.

Cibus & potus ſunt Divitiæ Chriſtianorum.

1. To his condition, for what is a Saint but a Stranger and Pilgrim upon earth, a man in a ſtrange Countrey travelling homeward? So *David* profeſſed himſelf, *Pſal.* 119. 19. *I am a ſtranger in this Earth.* And ſo thoſe worthies, who are now at home in heaven, *Heb.* 11. 13. they profeſſed themſelves to be ſtrangers and Pilgrims upon earth, and to ſeek a Countrey; a *viaticum* contents a traveller, he will not cumber himſelf with ſuperfluous things which would rather clog and tire, than expedite and help him in his journey.

1.

It ſuits beſt with his deſires, I mean his regular and adviſed deſires. For,

2.

1. A gracious ſoul earneſtly deſires a free condition in the world, he is ſenſible he hath much work to do, a race to run, and is loath to be clog'd or have his foot in the ſnare of the cares or pleaſures of this life. He knows that fulneſs expoſes to wantonneſs and irreligion, *Deut.* 6. 12. *Hoſ.* 13. 6. 'Tis hard, in the midſt of ſo many tempting objects, to keep the golden bridle of moderation upon the affections. The heart of a Chriſtian, like the Moon, commonly ſuffers an eclipſe when it is at the full, and that by the interpoſition of the earth.

It

It was *Solomons* fulneſs that drew out and diſſolved his ſpirits, and brought him to ſuch a low ebb in ſpirituals, that it remaines a queſtion with ſome, Whether he ever recovered it to his dying day. As it is the miſery of the poor to be neglected of men, ſo it is the miſery of the rich to neglect God. Who can be poorer than to have the world, and love it? Or richer, than to enjoy but little of it, and live above it?

And on the other ſide, extream poverty is no leſs expoſed to ſin and danger, *Levit.* 6. 2, 3, 4. As high and lofty trees are ſubject to ſtorms and tempeſts, ſo the loweſt ſhrubs to be brows'd on by every beaſt: and therefore, a Saint deſires a juſt competency as the fitteſt, becauſe the freeſt ſtate.

A gracious perſon deſires no more but a competency, becauſe there is moſt of God's love and care diſcovered in giving in our daily bread, by a daily providence. It is betwixt ſuch a condition, and a fulneſs of creature-proviſions in our hand, as it was betwixt *Egypt* and *Canaan*; *Egypt* was water'd with the foot from the River *Nilus*, and little of God was ſeen in that mercy; but *Canaan* depended upon the dews and ſhowers of heaven; and ſo, every ſhower of rain was a refreſhing ſhower to their ſouls, as well as bodies. Moſt men that have a ſtock of creature-comforts in their hands, look upon all as coming in an ordinary natural courſe, and ſee very little of God in their mercies. *Pope Adrian* built a Colledge at *Lovain*, and cauſed this inſcription to be written, in letters of Gold on the gates thereof; *Trajectum plantavit, Lovanium rigavit, Cæſar dedit incrementum.* (i. e. *Utrecht* planted me, *Lavain* water'd me, and *Cæſar* gave the increaſe. One to reprove his folly, wrote underneath, *Hic Deus Nihil fecit*; Here God did nothing. Carnal men, they ſow, and reap, and eat, and look no farther.

But now, when a man ſees his mercies come in by the ſpecial and aſſiduous care of God for him, there is a double ſweetneſs in thoſe mercies; the natural ſweetneſs which comes from the creature it ſelf, every one, even the beaſts can taſt that as well as thee; but beſides that, there is a ſpiritual ſweetneſs, far exceeding the former, which none but a believer

believer taſts: and much of that comes from the manner in which he receives it, becauſe it comes (be it never ſo courſe or little) as a Covenant mercy to him. *He hath given bread to them that fear him, he is ever mindful of his Covenant*, *Pſal.* 111. 5. *Luther*, who made many a meal upon a broiled Herring, was wont to ſay, *Mendicato pane hic vivamus, an non hoc fulcbre ſarcitur in eo, quod paſcimur pane cum angelis & vita æterna, Chriſto & Sacramentis*; Let us be content with courſe fare here, have we not the bread that came down from heaven? do we not feed with Angels; a pregnant inſtance of the ſweetneſs of ſuch mercies, is given us by a worthy Divine of our own, Mr. *Iſaac Ambroſe*, "For mine own "part (ſaith he) however the Lord hath ſeen cauſe to give me "but a poor pittance of outward things (for which I bleſs "his name) yet in the income thereof, I have many times "obſerved ſo much of his peculiar providence, that thereby "they have been very much ſweetned, and my heart hath "been raiſed to admire his grace. When of late under an "hard diſpenſation (which I judge not meet to mention, "wherein I ſuffered with inward peace conſciencioufly) all "ſtreams of wonted ſupplies being ſtopt, the waters of re-"lief for my ſelf and family did run low. I went to bed "with ſome ſtaggerings and doubtings of the fountains let-"ting out its ſelf for our refreſhing, but ere I did awake in "the morning, a Letter was brought to my bedſide, which "was ſigned by a choice friend, Mr. *Anthony Aſh*, which "reported ſome unexpected breakings out of God's good-"neſs for my comfort. Theſe are ſome of his lines— Your "God, who hath given you an heart thankfully to record "your experiences of his goodneſs, doth renew experiences "for your encouragement. Now I ſhall report one which will "raiſe your ſpirit towards the *God* of your mercy. *&c.* where-upon he ſweetly concludes, "One morſel of God's Provi-"ſion, (eſpecially if it come unexpected, and upon Prayer, "when wants are moſt) will be more ſweet to a ſpiritual re-"liſh, than all former full injoyments were.

Epiſtle to the Earl of *Bedford ante ultima.*

Many mercies come unask'd for, and they require thankfulneſs; but when mercies come in upon prayer, and as a return

return of prayer, their ſweetneſs more than doubles; for now its both God's bleſſing upon his own inſtitution, and a ſeal ſet to his promiſe at once, *Pſal.* 66. 16,17. Doubtleſs *Hannah* found more comfort in her *Samuel*, and *Rachel* in her *Naphthali*, (the one being ask'd of God, and the other wraſtled for with God as their names import) than mothers ordinarily do in their Children.

REFLECTIONS.

Do the people of God deſire only ſo much of the Creature as may fit them for the ſervice of God; what a wretch then am I that have deſired only ſo much of Religion as may fit me to gain the creature! As God's people have ſubjected all their creature injoyments to Religion, ſo oppoſitely, O my ſoul, thou haſt ſubjected Religion to thy worldly intereſt and deſigns. Inſtead of eating and drinking to ſerve God, I have ſerved God that I might eat and drink; yea, I have not only acted below Religion, but below reaſon alſo; for reaſon dictates plainly, that the meanes muſt never be more excellent than the end. Wretch taht I am, to make Religion a ſlave to my luſt, a ſtirrup to advancement, an artifice to carry on my carnal deſigns, verily I have my reward; and this is all the good I am ever like to get by it. The reflection of the deſigning Hypocrite.

And no leſs ſhould the worldling tremble, to conſider how he hath caſt off the duties of religion, made them ſtand aſide and give place to the world. Inſtead of deſiring ſo much only as might make him ſerviceable to God, he thruſts aſide the ſervice of God to get as much of the world as he can, who is ſo far from making godlineſs the end of his creature-comforts, that he rather looks upon it as an obſtacle and hinderance to them. May not the very heathens make me bluſh? could *Ariſtotle* deliver this as a true rule to proſperity, to make Religion our firſt and chief care? could *Ariſtippus* ſay, he would rather neglect his means than his mind? his Farm than his ſoul? Will the very *Mahometans*, how urgent ſoever their buſineſs be, lay it all aſide, five times in the day to pray? yea, is it common to a Proverb among the very *Papiſts* The Worldlings Reflection.

that Maſs and meat hinders no man, and yet I that profeſs my ſelf a Chriſtian, thruſt out duty for every trifle? Oh wretched ſoul! how hath the God of this World blinded mine eyes? can the world indeed do that for me, that Chriſt can do? hath it ever proved true to them that truſted it and doted on it? Hath it not at laſt turn'd them off as men turn off a Sumpter horſe at night, that hath been a drudge to carry their Gold and ſilver for them all day, and at laſt is turn'd out with an empty belly and a galled back? O how righteous will that ſentence of God be? Go cry to the gods whom thou haſt ſerved!

The gracious ſoul's reflection.

And may not many gracious hearts turn in upon themſelves with ſhame and ſorrow, to conſider how unſatisfied they have been in that condition, that others have prefer'd and eſteem'd as the greateſt of all outward mercies? I have indeed been fed with food convenient, but not contented: How hath my heart been tortured from day to day with anxious thoughts, what I ſhall eat and drink, and wherewith I and mine ſhould be clothed? I pretend indeed that I care but for a competency of the world, but ſure I am, my cares about it have been incompetent. Come my diſtruſtful earthly heart, let me propound a few queſtions to thee about this matter, and anſwer truly to what I ſhall now demand of thee.

1. *Queſt.* Haſt thou here a continuing City? art thou at home, or upon thy journey, that thou art ſo ſolicitous about the world? thy profeſſion indeed ſpeaks thee a ſtranger upon earth, but thy converſation a home-dweller. *Eraſmus* ſaid he deſired honours and riches, no more than a weary horſe doth a heavy Cloak-bag. Wouldſt thou not account him a fool that would victual his Ship, as much to croſs the Channel to *France*, as if ſhe were bound for the *Eaſt-Indies*? Alas! it will be but a little while, and then there will be no more need of any of theſe things. 'Tis ſad, that a ſoul which ſtands at the door of eternity, ſhould be perplexing it ſelf about food and raiment.

2. *Queſt.* Or, 2ly. Which of all the Saints haſt thou known to be the better for much of the world? it hath been ſome mens utter

utter ruin. Seldom doth God ſuffer men to be their own carvers, but they cut their own fingers. *To give riches and pleaſures to an evil man* (ſaith *Ariſtotle is but to give wine to one that hath a Fever.* Where there is no *want*, there is uſually much *wantonneſs*. What a ſad ſtory was that of *Pius Quintus*; When I was in a low condition (ſaid he) I had ſome comfortable hopes of my ſalvation, but when I came to be a Cardinal, I greatly doubted of it; but ſince I came to the Popedom, I have no hope at all. Though this poor undone wretch ſpake it out, and others keep it in, yet doubtleſs he hath many thouſand fellows in the world, that might ſay as much would they but ſpeak the truth.

And even Gods own people, though the world hath not excluded them out of heaven, yet it hath ſorely clog'd them in the way thither. Many that have been very humble, holy and heavenly in a low condition, have ſuffered a ſad ebb in a full condition. What a cold blaſt have they felt coming from the cares and delights of this life, to chill both their graces and comforts! it had been well for ſome of God's people if they had never known what proſperity meant.

Is not this a ſad ſimptom of a declining ſtate of ſoul, to be ſo hot, eager and anxious about the ſuperfluous trifles of this life. Think'ſt thou, O my ſoul! that one who walks in the views of that glory above, and maintains a converſation in heaven, can be much taken with theſe vanities? do not the viſions of God vail the tempting ſplendour of the creature! It was the opinion of ſome of the *Schoolmen*, that the reaſon why *Adam in Paradiſe* was not ſenſible of his nakedneſs, was becauſe he was wholly taken up in converſing with God. But this is certain, lively and ſweet communion with God, blunts and duls the edge of the affections to earthly things; and canſt thou be ſatisfied my ſoul with ſuch gains as are attended with ſuch ſpiritual loſſes; 3. *Queſt.*

To conclude, is it not diſhonourable to God, and a juſtification of the way of the world, for me that profeſs my ſelf a Chriſtian to be as eager after riches as other men? *After all theſe things do the nations ſeek*, Mat. 6. 32. If I had no father in heaven, nor promiſe in the word, it were another 4. *Queſt.*

matter, but ſince my heavenly father knows what I have need of, and hath charged me to be careful in nothing, but only tell him my wants, *Phil.* 4.6. How unbecoming a thing is it in me to live and act as I have done! Let me henceforth learn to meaſure and eſtimate my condition, rather by its uſefulneſs to God than its content and eaſe to my fleſh.

The Poem.

IF (1) fruit and ſervice be indeed the end
To which my being and redemption tend,
Reaſon concludes, that ſtate of all the reſt
Which is moſt ſerviceable to be beſt.
And ſuch a ſtate experience ſhews to lye,
'Twixt (2) fulneſs, and a pinching poverty.
This golden *Mean*, is worth a golden *Mine*;
He that hath this, ſhould be (3) aſham'd to whine.
The full-fed Chriſtian like the (4) Ox i'th ſtall,
Is no way fit to work or plow withal.
And (5) penury like *Pharaoh's* leaner kine,
Devours the fatteſt portions of our time.
That man with whom this earthly (6) pleaſure's found,
Or in whoſe heart thoſe anxious (7) cares abound;
And yet can walk by Scripture rule and line,
Will need a better head and heart than mine.
A ſingle (8) ſtaff the traveller may find
Of uſe, and ſervice; but if you ſhould bind
A bundle of them to his back, they'l make
Him ſlack his pace and cry my ſhoulders (9) ake.
I am a (1) traveller, this world's my way.
A ſingle ſtaff may be of uſe to ſtay
My feeble body, if it do not crack,
By too hard (2) leaning on it; but my back
Will bear no more: Alas, I ſoon ſhould tire:
And more than (3) one I cannot well deſire.

(1) Iſa. 5.2.
(2) Prov. 30. 7, 8, 9.
(3) Heb. 13.5.
(4) Deu. 32.15.
(5) Prov. 30.9.
(6) Luk. 8.14.
(7) Luk. 8.14.
(8) Mark 6.8.
(9) Hab. 2.6.
(1) Pſ. 119.19. Heb. 11.13,14.
(2) Job 8.15. Iſa. 36.6.
(3) Heb. 13.5.

Lord

Lord, to (4) prescribe to thee becomes me not,
I rather do (5) submit unto my (6) lot;
But yet let condescending grace admit
Thy servants (7) suit this once, and this is it.
The staff of bread (8) convenient let me have,
And manage it (9) discreetly; so 'twill save
Thy feeble servant from the mire and (1) dirt.
But more or less than this may do me hurt.
Or if thou say thy servant shall have none,
Then strengthen faith that I may go (2) alone.

(4) Job 21.22.
(5) Isa. 47.4.
(6) Psa. 15. 6, 7.
(7) Gen. 18.32
(8) Prov 30.8.
(9) Eccl. 6.2.
(1) Prov 30.9.
(2) Hab. 3.17.

CHAP. IV.

Spent barren Land you can restore and nourish.
Decayed Christians God can cause to flourish.

Upon the improvement of bad ground.

OBSERVATION.

WHen Land is spent out by tillage, or for want of manuring, the careful husbandman hath many wayes to recover and bring it in heart again. He lets it lye follow to give it rest, and time to recover it self, carries out his sand, lime and compost, to refresh and quicken it again, and in pasture and medow ground, will wash it (if possible) with a current of water, or the float of the wayes after a fall of rain, which is to the earth as a spring of new blood to a consumptive body. He cuts down and kills the weeds that suck it out, and causes them to make restitution of what they have purloined from it, by rotting upon the place where they grew. As careful are they to recover it when it is spent, as an honest Physician is of his patient in a languishing condition, for he knows his field will be as grateful to him, and fully requite his care and cast.

APPLI-

APPLICATION.

AS man's, ſo God's Husbandry is ſometimes out of caſe, not by yielding too many crops, but too few. The myſtical Husbandman hath ſome fields (I mean particular ſocieties and perſons) who were once fragrant and fruitful like a field which God had bleſſed, but are now decayed and grown barren; whoſe gleanings formerly, were more than their vintage now; the things that are in them are ready to dye, *Rev.* 3. 3. 'Tis poſſible, yea, too common for gracious ſouls to be reduced to a very low ebb, both of graces and comforts; how low I will not ſay: Our *Britiſh Divines* tell us, That grace indeed cannot be totally intermitted; nor finally loſt; but there may be an omiſſion of the act, though not an amiſſion of the habit: the act may be perverted, though the faith cannot be ſubverted; it may be ſhaken in, though not ſhaken out; its fruits may fall, but its ſap lyes hid in its root; they demerit the loſs of the kingdom, but loſe it not effectively; the effect of juſtification may be ſuſpended, but the ſtate of the juſtified cannot be diſſloved.

How far true grace in a believer may fail.

Gratia nec totaliter intermittitur, nec finaliter amittitur. Actus omittitur, habitus non amittitur. Actio pervertitur, fides non ſubvertitur. Concutitur, non excutitur. Defluit fructus, latet ſuccus. Jus ad regnum amittunt demeritorie, non effective. Effectus juſtificationis ſuſpenditur, at ſtatus juſtificati non diſſolvitur. Suff. Britt.

Certain it is, one that like *Paul* hath been rapt up with joy, even to the third heavens, and cryed, *I am more than a conqueror, who can ſeparate me from the love of God?* May at another time lye mourning as at the gates of death, crying, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* One that hath walked in ſweet communion with God, ſunning himſelf in the light of his countenance, may afterwards *walk in darkneſs, and ſee no light*, Iſa. 50. 10. He that hath caſt anchor within the vail, and rode ſecurely in the peaceful harbour of aſſurance, may ſeem to feel his anchor of

of hope come home to him, and go adrift into the ſtormy Ocean again, crying with the Church, *Lam.* 3. 18. *My hope is periſhed from the Lord.* His calm and clear Air may be overcaſt and clouded, yea filled with ſtorms and tempeſts, lightnings and thunders; his graces, like under-ground flowers in the Winter, may all diſappear, and hide their beautiful heads.

To *God* he may ſay, I am caſt out of thy ſight; I know thou canſt do much, but wilt thou ſhew wonders to the dead?

To the *Promiſes* he may ſay, you are ſweet things indeed, but what have I to do with you? I could once indeed rejoyce in you, as my portion; but now I doubt I graſped a ſhadow, a fancy inſtead of you. To *Saints* he may ſay, turn away from me, labour not to comfort me, O do not ſpill your precious ointment of conſolation upon my head, for what have I to do with comfort? to former *experiences*, he may ſay in his haſt, you are all lyars. To the *light of God's countenance*, he may ſay, farewell ſweet light, I ſhall behold thee no more. To *Satan*, he may ſay, O mine enemy, thou haſt at laſt prevailed againſt me, thou art ſtronger than I, and haſt overcome, To *duties and ordinances*, he may ſay, where is the ſweetneſs I once found in you? you were once ſweeter to me than the hony comb; but now as taſtleſs, as the white of an egg. O ſad relaſpe? deplored change! *quantum mutatus ab illo?*

But will God leave his poor creatures helpleſs in ſuch a caſe as this? Shall their leaf fall, their branches wither, their joy, their life, their heart depart? will he ſee their graces fainting, their hopes gaſping, the new creature panting, the things that are in them ready to dye, and will he not regard it? yes, yes, *There is hope of a tree if it be cut down, and the root thereof wax old in the earth, yet by the ſcent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs, like a plant*, Job 14.8 9. This poor declined ſoul, as ſad as it ſits at the gates of hell, may rouze up it ſelf at laſt, and ſay to *Satan* that ſtands triumphing over him, *Rejoyce not over me, O mine enemy, for though I fall, yet I ſhall ariſe; though I ſit in darkneſs, the Lord will be a light*

light unto me, Mich. 7. 8. He may raiſe up himſelf upon his bed of languiſhing for all this, and ſay to *God*, *though thou haſt chaſtened me ſore, yet haſt thou not given me over unto death.* He may turn about to the Saints, that have mourned for him and with a lightſome countenance ſay, *I ſhall not dye but live, and declare the works of the Lord.* He may ſay to the *promiſes*, you are the true and faithful ſayings of God, my unbelief did bely you; I ſaid in my haſt you were lyars, but I eat my words, I am aſhamed of my folly. Surely, O Soul, there is yet hope in thine end, thou mayſt be reſtored, *Pſal.* 23. 3. Thou mayſt yet recover thy verdure, and thy dew be as the dew of herbs. For,

1. Is he not thy father, and a father full of compaſſions and bowels? And can a father ſtand by his dying Child, ſee his fainting fits, hear his melting groans, and pitty begging looks; and not help him; eſpecially having reſtoratives by him that can do it? Surely, *as a father pities his own Children, ſo will thy God pitty thee*, Pſal. 103. 12, 13. *He will ſpare thee, as a father ſpareth his own ſon that ſerves him*, Mal. 3. 17. Heark, how his bowels yearn? *I have ſurely heard* Ephraim *bemoaning himſelf, is not* Ephraim *my dear ſon? is he not a pleaſant child? for ſince I ſpake againſt him, I do earneſtly remember him ſtill, I will ſurely have mercy on him*, Jer. 31. 20.

2. Doth he not know thy life would be altogether uſeleſs to him, if he ſhould not reſtore thee? what ſervice art thou fit to perform to him, in ſuch a condition? *Thy dayes will conſume like ſmoak, whilſt thy heart is ſmitten and withered like graſs*, Pſal. 102. 3, 4. Thy months will be months of vanity, they will fly away and ſee no good, *Job* 7. 3. If he will but quicken thee again, then thou muſt call upon his name, *Pſal.* 80. 18. but in a dead and languiſhing condition, thou art no more fit for any work of God, than a ſick man is for manual labours; and ſurely he hath not put thoſe precious and excellent graces of his Spirit within thee for nothing; they were planted there for fruit and ſervice, and therefore doubtleſs he will revive thee again.

3. Yea, doſt thou not think he ſees thine inability to bear ſuch a condition long? he knows *thy Spirit would fail before him*,

him, and the ſoul which he hath made, Iſa. 57. 16. *David* told him as much, in the like condition, *Pſal.* 143. 7, 8. *Hear me ſpeedily, O Lord, for my ſpirit faileth; hide not thy face from me, leſt I be like unto thoſe that go down into the pit*; q. d. Lord, make haſt and recover my languiſhing ſoul; otherwiſe, whereas thou haſt now a *ſick child*, thou wilt ſhortly have a *dead child*.

And in like manner *Job* expoſtulated with him, *Job* 6. 1, 2, 3, 11, 12. *My grief is heavier than the ſand of the Sea, my words are ſwallowed up, for the arrows of the Almighty are within me; and the poyſon thereof drinks up my ſpirits: the terrors of God do ſet themſelves in array againſt me, what is my ſtrength that I ſhould hope? is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtones? or are my bones of braſs?* So *Chap.* 7. 12. *Am I a Sea, or a Whale?* &c. Other troubles a man may, but this he cannot bear, *Prov.* 18. 14. And therefore doubtleſs ſeaſonable and gracious revivings will come, *He will not ſtir up all his wrath, for he remembers thou art but fleſh; a wind that paſſeth away, and cometh not again*, Pſal. 78. 38 39. He hath wayes enough to do it, if he do but unvail his bleſſed face and make it ſhine again upon thee, thou art ſaved, *Pſal.* 80. 3. the manifeſtations of his love, will be to thy ſoul, as ſhowers to the parched graſs; thy ſoul that now droops, and hangs the wing, ſhall then revive and leap for joy, *Iſa.* 61. 1. A new face ſhall come upon thy graces, they ſhall bud again, and bloſſom as a Roſe; if he do but ſend a ſpring of auxiliary grace into thy ſoul, to actuate the dull habits of inherent grace, the work is done; then ſhalt thou return to thy firſt works again, *Rev.* 2. 4, 5. and ſing, as in the dayes of thy youth.

Gratia gratiam poſtulat.

REFLECTIONS.

O this is my very caſe, ſaith many a poor Chriſtian; thus my ſoul languiſhes and droops from day to day: 'tis good news indeed, that God both can and will reſtore my ſoul. but ſad that I ſhould fall into ſuch a ſtate. How unlike am I to what once I was? Surely, as the old men wept, when they ſaw how ſhort the ſecond *Temple* came of the glory of the

first, so may I sit down and weep bitterly, to consider how much my first love, and first duties excelled the present. For,

1. A convictive Reflection

Is my heart so much in heaven now, as it was wont to be? Say, O my soul! dost thou not remember, when like the beloved Disciple thou *layest* in *Jesus* bosome? how didst thou sweeten communion with him? how restless and impatient wast thou in his absence! Divine withdrawments were to thee as the hell of hell: What a burden was the world to me in those dayes! Had it not been for conscience of my duty, I could have been willing to let all lye, that communion with Christ might suffer no interruption. When I awaked in the night, how was the darkness enlightned by the heavenly glimpses of the countenance of my God upon me? How did his company shorten those hours, and beguile the tediousness of the night? O my soul, speak thy experience, is it now as it was then! No, no, those dayes are past and gone, and thou become much a stranger to that heavenly life. Art thou able with truth to deny this charge? When occasionally I pass by those places, which were once to me as *Jacob's Bethel* to him; I sigh at the remembrance of former passages betwixt me and heaven there; and say with *Job*, Chap. 29. *O that it were with me as in moneths past, as in the dayes when God preserved me, when his candle shined upon my head, when by his light I walked through darkness, when the Almighty was yet with me, when I put on righteousness and it cloathed me, when my glory was fresh in me! when I remember these things, my soul is poured out within me.*

2.

Is thy obedience to the commands of Christ, and motions to duty, as free and cheerful as they were wont to be? Call to mind, my soul, the times when thou wast born down the stream of love to every duty, if the spirit did but whisper to thee, saying, *Seek my face*, how did my spirit eccho to his calls? saying, *Thy face Lord will I seek*, Psal. 27. 8. If God had any work to be done, how readily did I offer my service? Here am I Lord, send me. My soul made me as the chariots of *Aminadab*; love oyled the wheels of my affection, and *his commandments were not grievous*, 1 John 5. 3. *Non tardat*

uncta

nulla rota. There were no ſuch quarrellings with the command, no ſuch excuſes and delayes as there are now. No, ſuch was my love to Chriſt, and delight to do his will, that I could no more keep back my ſelf from duty, than a man that's carried away in a crowd.

Or laſtly, tell me, O my ſoul, doſt thou bemoan thy ſelf, or grieve ſo tenderly for ſin, and for grieving the holy Spirit of God, as thou waſt wont to do? When formerly I had fallen by the hand of a temptation, how was I wont to lye in tears at the Lord's feet, bemoaning my ſelf? how did I haſten to my cloſet, and there cry like *Ezra*, Chap. 9. 6. *O my God, I am aſhamed, and bluſh to look up unto thee.* How did I ſigh and weep before him, and like *Ephraim*, ſmite upon my thigh, ſaying, *What have I done?* Ah my ſoul! how didſt thou work, ſtrive, and caſt about, how to recover thy ſelf again? haſt thou forgotten, how thou wouldſt ſometimes look up and ſigh bitterly; Ah! what a God have I provoked? what love and goodneſs have I abuſed? ſometimes look in and weep, Ah! what motions did I withſtand? what a good ſpirit have I grieved? Ah! my ſoul thou wouldſt have abhor'd thy ſelf, thou couldſt never have born it, had thy heart been as ſtupid and as relentleſs then as now. If ever a poor ſoul had reaſon to diſſolve it ſelf into tears for its ſad relapſes, I have.

But yet mourn not, O my ſoul, as one without hope. Remember, *There is hope in* Iſrael *concerning this thing.* As low as thy condition is, it is not deſperate, it is not a diſeaſe that ſcorns a Remedy; many a man that hath been ſtretcht out for dead, hath revived again, and lived many a comfortable day in the world; many a tree that hath caſt both leaf and fruit, by the skill of a prudent Husbandman, hath been recovered again, and made both flouriſhing and fruitful. Is it not eaſier think'ſt thou, to recover a languiſhing man to health, than a dead man to life? and yet this God did for me, *Eph.* 2. 1. Is any thing too hard for the Lord? *Though my ſoul draw nigh to the pit, and my life to the deſtroyers, yet he can ſend me a meſſenger, one among a thouſand, that ſhall declare to me my uprightneſs then ſhall he deliver me from going down into the pit,*

2. A ſupporting Reflection.

my fleſh ſhall be freſher than a Childes, and I ſhall return to the dayes of my youth, Job 33. 21. Though my flouriſh, and much of my fruit too be gone, and I am a withering tree; yet as long as the root of the matter is in me, there is more hope of ſuch a poor decayed withered tree, than of the hypocrite that wants ſuch a root, in all his glory and bravery. His Sun ſhall ſet, and never riſe again; but I live in expectation of a ſweet morning, after this dark night.

Rouze up therefore, O my ſoul, ſet thy faith awork on Chriſt for quickning grace, for he hath life in himſelf, and quickens whomſoever he will, *Joh.* 7. 38. Stir up that little which remains, *Rev.* 3. 2. Haſt thou not ſeen lively flames proceed from glimmering and dying ſparks, when carefully collected and blown up? get amongſt the moſt lively and quickening Chriſtians; as *iron ſharpens iron, ſo will theſe ſet an edge upon thy dull affections*, Prov. 27. 17. Acts 18. 15. But above all, cry mightily to the Lord for quickening, he will not deſpiſe thy cry. The moans of a Diſtreſſed Child, work upon the bowels of a tender father. And be ſure to keep within thy view, the great things of eternity, which are ready to be revealed; live in the believing and ſerious contemplations of them, and be dead if thou canſt. 'Tis true, thou haſt reaſon enough from thy condition, to be for ever humbled; but no reaſon at all from thy God, to be in the leaſt diſcouraged.

The *Poem*.

(1) Joh. 15. 1.
(2) 1 Cor. 3. 9.
(3) Pſa. 4. 3.
(4) Job 29. 3, 4.
(5) Hoſ. 14. 5, 6
(6) Hoſ. 6. 3.

THou art the (1) Husbandman, and I
A worthleſs plot of (2) Husbandry,
Whom ſpecial love did ne'retheleſs
Divide (3) from natures wilderneſs.
Then did the (4) Sun-ſhine of thy face
And ſweet (5) illapſes of thy grace
Like (6) *April* ſhowers, and warming gleams
Diſtil its dews, reflect its beams.

My

My dead (7) affections then were green,
And hopeful (8) buds on them were seen:
These into duties soon were (9) turn'd
In which my heart within me (10) burn'd.
O halcyon dayes! thrice happy state!
Each place was (1) *Bethel*, heavens gate.
What sweet discourse! what heavenly (2) talk!
Whilst with thee I did daily (3) walk!
Mine eyes o'reflow, my heart doth (4) sink;
As oft as on those dayes I think.
For (5) strangeness now is got between
My God and me, as may be seen
By what is (6) now, and what was then;
'Tis just as if I were (7) two men.
My fragrant branches (8) blasted be,
No fruits like those that I can see.
Some (9) Canker-worm lyes at my root.
Which (1) fades my leaves, destroyes my fruit.
My soul is (2) banished from thy sight,
For this it (3) mourneth day and night.
Yet why dost thou (4) desponding lye?
With (5) *Jonah* cast a backward eye.
Sure in thy God help may be had,
There's precious (6) balm in *Gilead*.
That God that made me spring at first,
When I was barren, (7) and accurst;
Can much more easily (8) restore
My soul to what it was before.
'Twas (9) *Haman's* (1) *Job's* (2) and *David's* case,
Yet all recover'd were by grace.
A word, a (3) smile on my poor soul;
Will make it perfect, sound, and whole.
A (4) glance of thine hath soon dissolv'd
A soul in sin, and grief involv'd.
Lord, if thou (5) canst not work the cure,
I am contented to endure.

(7) Jer. 2. 3.
(8) Cant. 7. 12.
(9) Acts 9. 11.
(10) Lu. 24. 32.
(1) Gen. 28. 16. 17.
(2) Exod. 34. 29.
(3) Gen. 6. 7.
(4) Psa. 42. 6.
(5) Cant. 5. 6.
(6) Rev. 2. 5.
(7) 2 Chr. 17. 3.
(8) Psa. 102. 4.
(9) Isa. 59. 2.
(1) Isa. 64. 6.
(2) Psa. 88. 6, 14.
(3) Psal. 77. 2.
(4) Psa. 42. 11.
(5) Jon. 2. 4.
(6) Jer. 8. 22.
(7) Eze. 16. 4.
(8) Psa. 23. 3.
(9) Psal. 88.
(1) Job 14.
(2) Psa. 30.
(3) Psa. 80. 3.
(4) Luk. 22. 61, 62.
(5) Jer. 22. 17

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Upon the uncurableneſs of ſome bad ground.

No skill can mend the miry ground, and ſure
Some ſouls the Goſpel leaves as paſt a cure.

OBSERVATION.

ALthough the induſtry and skill of the Husbandman can make ſome ground that was uſeleſs and bad, good for tillage or paſture, and improve that which was barren, and by his coſt and pains make one Acre worth ten; yet ſuch is the nature of ſome rocky or miry ground, where the water ſtands, and there is no way to cleanſe it, that it can never be made fruitful. The Husband-man is fain to let it alone, as an incurable piece of waſt and worthleſs ground; and though the Sun and clouds ſhed their influences on it, as well as upon better Land, yet that doth not at all mend it. Nay, the more ſhowers it receives, the worſe it proves. For theſe do no way fecundate or improve it; nothing thrives there, but worthleſs flags and ruſhes.

APPLICATION.

MAny alſo there are under the Goſpel, who are given over by God to judicial blindneſs, hardneſs of heart, a reprobate ſenſe, and perpetual barrenneſs; ſo that how excellent ſoever the means are which they enjoy, and how efficacious ſoever, to the converſion, edification and ſalvation of others; yet they ſhall never do their ſouls good, *Ezek.* 47. 9, 11. *Every thing whereſoever the River comes ſhall live but the miry places thereof, and the marſhes thereof ſhall never be healed but be given to ſalt*; (i. e.) given to an obſtinate and everlaſting barrenneſs. Compare *Deut.* 9. 23. By theſe waters, ſaith judicious Mr. *Strong*, underſtand the doctrine of the Goſpel; as *Rev.* 21. 2. a River of water of life, clear as Chriſtal.

Spiritual barrenneſs, p. 8.

Chriſtal. *Hic fluvius eſt uberima doctrina Chriſti*, ſaith Mr. *Brightman*. This River is the moſt fruitful doctrine of Chriſt, yet theſe waters do not heal the miry mariſh places, (*i. e.*) men that live unfruitfully under Ordinances, who are compared to miry and mariſh places in three reſpects.

(1) In miry places the water hath not free paſſage, but ſtands and ſettles there, So it is with theſe barren ſouls; therefore the *Apoſtle* prayes, that the Goſpel may run and be glorified, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 1. The word is ſaid to run, when it meets with no ſtop, *Cum libere propagatur*, when it is freely propagated and runs through the whole man; when it meets with no ſtop either in the mouth of the ſpeaker, or hearts of the hearers, as it doth in theſe.

(2) In a miry place, the earth and water is mixt together; this mixture makes mire. So when the truths of God do mix with the corruptions of men, that they either hold ſome truths, and yet live in their luſts, or elſe when men do make uſe of the truths of God to juſtifie and plead for their ſins. Or,

(3) When as in a miry place, the longer the water ſtands in it, the worſe it grows; ſo the longer men abide under Ordinances, the more filthy and polluted they grow: Theſe are the miry places that cannot be healed, their diſeaſe is incurable, deſperate.

O this is a ſad caſe, and yet very common! Many perſons are thus given over; as incorrigible and hopeleſs, *Rev.* 22. 11. *Let him that is filthy, be filthy ſtill.* Jer. 6. 29. *Reprobate ſilver ſhall men call them, for the Lord hath rejected them*, Iſa. 6. *Go make the heart of this people fat, their ears dull*, &c.

Chriſt executes by the Goſpel that curſe upon many ſouls, which he denounced againſt the figtree, *Mat.* 21. 19. *Let no fruit grow on thee henceforth for ever, and immediately the figtree withered away.* To be given up to ſuch a condition, is a fearful judgement indeed, a curſe with a witneſs; the ſum of all plagues, miſeries and judgments, a fatal ſtroke at the root it ſelf. It's a wo to have a bad heart, (ſaith one) but it's the depth of wo, to have a heart that ſhall never be made better. To be barren under the Goſpel is a ſore judgement, but to

have that *pertinax ſterilitas*, a pertinacious barrenneſs; this is to be twice dead, and pluckt up by the root, as *Jude* ſpeaks.

And to ſhew you the woful and miſerable ſtate and plight of ſuch men, let the following particulars be weighed. (1) Its a ſtroke at the ſoul it ſelf, an inward ſpiritual judgement; and by how much the more inward and ſpiritual any judgement is, by ſo much the more dreadful and lamentable. As ſoul mercies, are the beſt of mercies; ſo, ſoul-judgements, are the ſaddeſt of all judgements. If it were but a temporal ſtroke upon the body, the loſs of an eye, an ear, a hand, a foot, though in it ſelf it would be a conſiderable loſs; yet it were nothing to this. *Omnia Deus dedit duplicia* (ſaith *Chryſoſtom*) ſpeaking of bodily members; God hath given men double members, two eyes, if one be loſt, the other ſupplies its wants; two hands, two ears, two feet, that the failing of one, may be ſupplyed by the help of the other; *animam vero unam*; but one ſoul, if that periſh, there is not another to ſupply its loſs. The ſoul, ſaith a *Heathen*, is the man, that which is ſeen is not the man. The Apoſtle calls the body a vile body, *Phil.* 3. 21. and ſo it is compared with the ſoul; and *Daniel* calls it the *Sheath*, which is but a contemptible thing to the ſword, which is in it. O it were far better that many bodies periſh, than one ſoul; that every member were made the ſeat, and ſubject of the moſt exquiſite torture, than ſuch a judgement ſhould fall upon the ſoul.

(2) It's the ſevereſt ſtroke God can inflict upon the ſoul in this life, to give it up to barrenneſs; becauſe it cuts off all hopes, fruſtrates all means, nothing can be a bleſſing to him. If one come from the dead, if Angels ſhould deſcend from heaven to preach to him; there is no hope of him. If God ſhut up a man, who can open? *Job* 12. 14. As there was none found in heaven or earth, that could open the ſeals of that book, *Rev.* 5. 5. ſo is there no opening by the hand of the moſt able and skilful Miniſtry, thoſe ſeals of hardneſs, blindneſs and unbelief, thus impreſſed upon the ſpirit. Whom juſtice ſo locks up, mercy will never let out. This is that which makes up the *Anathema Maranatha*, 1 Cor. 16. 22. which

which is the dreadfulleſt curſe in all the book of God, cacurſed till the Lord come.

(3) 'Tis the moſt indiſcernable ſtroke to themſelves, that can be, and by that ſo much the more deſperate. Hence there is ſaid to be powred out upon them the ſpirit of ſlumber, *Iſa.* 29.10. *The Lord hath powred out upon you the ſpirit of deep ſleep, and hath cloſed your eyes. Montanus* renders it, The Lord hath mingled upon you the ſpirit of deep ſleep. And ſo it is an alluſion to a ſoporiferous Medicine mingled and made up of *opium* and ſuch like ſtupifactive ingredients, which caſts a man into ſuch a dead ſleep, that do what you will to him, he feels, he knows it not. *Make their eyes heavy, and their ears dull; leſt they ſhould ſee, and hear, and be converted,* Iſa. 6. 9, 10. This is the heart which cannot repent, which is ſpoken of, *Rom.* 2. 5. For men are not ſenſible at all of this judgment, they do not in the leaſt ſuſpect it, and that is their miſery. Though they be curſed trees which ſhall never bear any fruit to life, yet many times they bear abundance of other fair and pleaſant fruits to the eye, excellent gifts and rare endowments? And theſe deceive and undo them. *Mat.* 7. 22. *We have propheeyed in thy name*; this makes the wound deſperate, that there is no finding of it, no probe to ſearch it.

(4) 'Tis a ſtroke that cuts off from the ſoul all the comfort and ſweetneſs of Religion. A man may pray, hear, and confer, but all thoſe duties are dry ſtalks unto him, which yield no meat, no ſolid ſubſtantial nutriment; ſome common touches upon the affections he may ſometimes find in duty, the melting voice or Rhetorick of the Preacher may perhaps ſtrike his natural affections, as another Tragical ſtory pathetically delivered may do; but to have any real communion with God in Ordinances, any diſcoveries or views of the beauty of the Lord in them, that he cannot have; for theſe are the ſpecial effects and operations of the Spirit, which are alwayes reſtrained.

God hath ſaid to ſuch, as he did to them. *Gen.* 6. 3. *My ſpirit ſhall no longer ſtrive with them*; and then what ſweetneſs is there in Odinances? What is the word ſeparated from

the Spirit, but a dead Letter? it's the Spirit that quickens, 2 *Cor.* 3. 2. Friend, thou muſt know that the Goſpel works not like *a natural cauſe* upon thoſe that hear it; if ſo, the effect would alwayes follow, unleſs miraculouſly ſtopt and hindred; but it works like *a moral inſtituted cauſe*, whoſe efficacy and ſucceſs depends upon the arbitrary concurrence of the Spirit with it. *The wind blows where it liſteth, ſo is every one that is born of the Spirit*, Joh. 3. 8. *Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth.* Ordinances are as the pool of *Bethesda*, which had its healing vertue only when the *Angel* moved the waters; but the ſpirit never moves ſavingly upon the waters of Ordinances, for the healing of theſe ſouls, how many years ſoever they lye by them. Though others feel a Divine power in them, yet they ſhall not. As the men that travelled with *Paul*, when Chriſt appeared to him from heaven, they ſaw the light, but heard not the voice, which he heard to ſalvation: So it is with theſe, they ſee the Miniſters, hear the words, which are words of ſalvation to others, but not ſo to them. Concerning theſe miſerable Souls, we may ſigh and ſay to Chriſt, as *Martha* did concerning her brother *Lazarus*; Lord, if thou hadſt been here, in this Sermon, or in this prayer, this ſoul had not remained dead. But here is the woe that lyes upon him, God is departed from the means, and none can help him.

(5.) 'Tis ſuch a ſtroke upon the ſpirit of man, as is a fearful ſign of his eternal reprobation. 'Tis true we cannot poſitively ſay of a man in this life, he is a reprobate, one that God will never ſhew mercy to; but yet there are ſome probable marks of it upon ſome men in this world, and they are of a trembling conſideration where-ever they appear? of which this is one of the ſaddeſt, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3. *If our Goſpel be hid, 'tis hid to thoſe that are loſt, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not; leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.* So *Act.* 13. 48. *As many as were ordained unto eternal life believed. Ye believe not, becauſe ye are not of my ſheep*, Joh. 10. 26. And again, *Mat* 13. 11. *To you it is given to know the myſteries of the Kingdom, but to them it is not given.* There cannot

not be a more dreadful Character of a perſon marked out for wrath, than to continue under the Ordinances, as the Rocks and miry places do under the natural influences of heaven. What bleſſed opportunities had *Judas*? he was under Chriſt's own Miniſtry, he often heard the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth; he was night and day in his company, yet never the better; and why? becauſe he was *the ſon of perdition*; that is, a man appointed to deſtruction and wrath.

(6) And laſtly, to add no more. 'Tis ſuch a ſtroke of God upon the ſoules of men, as immediately foreruns hell and damnation, *Heb.* 6. 8. *But that which beareth thorns and bryars is rejected, and is nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is to be burnt.* So that look as ſome Saints in this world, have had a prelibation or foretaſte of heaven, which the Scripture calls *the earneſt of the Spirit*; ſo this is a precurſor of hell, a ſign of wrath at the door. We may ſay of it, as 'tis ſaid of the pale horſe in the *Revelation*, that hell follows it. *If a man abide not in me,* (ſaith Chriſt, *John* 15 6.) *he is caſt forth as a branch and withered*; which is the very ſtate of theſe barren, curſed ſouls. And what follows? Why, ſaith he, men gather them, and caſt them into the fire, and they are burned. Lo this is the vengeance which the Goſpel executes upon this barren ground.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The ſincere ſouls Reflection.

Well then, bleſſed be God that made me feel the ſaving power of the Goſpel. O, let God be exalted for ever for this mercy! that how defective ſoever I am in common gifts, though I have a dull underſtanding, a leaking memory, a ſtammering tongue; yet I have felt, and do feel the power of the Goſpel upon my heart. I bleſs thee (my God) that although I labour under many ſpiritual infirmities, yet I am not ſick of this incurable diſeaſe. I have given thee indeed juſt cauſe to inflict and execute this dreadful curſe upon me alſo, but thou haſt not only dealt with me after my deſerts; but according to the riches of thy mercy. Some little fruit I

bring forth, and what it is, is by vertue of my union with *Jesus Christ*, *Rom.* 7. 4. And this hath more in it as to my comfort, than all the glittering gifts and splendid performances of the most glorious hypocrite can yield to him. If I might have my choice (saith one) I would chuse and prefer the most despicable and sordid work of a rustick *Christian*, before all the victories of *Alexander* and triumphs of *Cæsar*. *Blessed therefore be the Lord who hath abounded unto me, in all spiritual blessings, in heavenly things in Christ Jesus.*

I cannot remember a Sermon as another can, but blessed be God that I am able to savour it, and feel it; that I have an heart to love, and a will to obey, all that God discovers to be my duty.

2. The formal Professors Reflection.

O, then, how little cause have I to make my boast of Ordinances, and glory in my external priviledges, who never bear spiritual fruit under them? If I well consider my condition, there is matter of *trembling*, and not of *glorying* in these things. It may be, while I have been glorying in them, and lifting up my secure heart upon them, the Lord hath been secretly blasting my soul under them, and insensibly executing this horrible curse by them. Shall I boast, that with *Capernaum*, *I am lifted up to heaven*, since I may with her at last be cast down to hell? And if so, Lord, what a hell will my hell be? It will be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* than for me. It drew tears from the eyes of *Christ*, when he was looking upon *Jerusalem*, under the same consideration that I doubt I have cause to look upon my own soul, *Luke* 19. 41. *He wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.* So long I have been a hearer, a Professor of the Gospel, so many years I have injoyed its distinguishing Ordinances, but have they not been all dry and empty things to me? hath not the spirit of formality acted me in them? Have not self ends, and worldly respects lain at the bottom of my best duties? Have not my discourses in communion with the Saints been Trade words, speaking what I have learnt, but not felt? sad is my condition now; but it would be desperate and irrecoverable, shouldst thou execute this curse upon me.

And

And what may I think of my condition? Lord, I acknowledge my unprofitableness under the means hath been shameful; and this hath made my condition doubtful. I have often trembled for fear, lest my root had been blasted by such a curse; but if so, whence is this trembling? whence these fears and sorrows about it? doth such fruit grow in that soyl which thou hast cursed? I am told but now, that on whom this judgment falls, to them thou giveſt an heart that cannot repent. Lord, I bless thee for these evidences of freedom from the curse; for the fruits of fear, sorrow, and holy jealousie. The laws of men spare for the fruits sake, and wilt not thou spare me also my God, if there be found in me a blessing in the bud, *Isa.* 65.8.

3. The less fruitful Christians Reflection.

Romana leges pœnam prægnanti differunt. Chrysost.

To conclude, what a serious Reflection should this occasion in every dispenser of the Gospel? how should he say when he goes to preach the Gospel, I am now going to preach that word, which is to be *a savour of life or death to these souls*; upon how many of my poor hearers may the curse of perpetual barrenness be executed this day! O how should such a thought melt his heart into compassion over them, and make him beg hard, and plead earnestly with God for a better issue of the Gospel than this upon them?

4. The Gospel Preachers Reflection.

The Poem.

YOU that besides your pleasant fruitful fields,
Have useless bogs, and rocky ground that yields
You no advnatage, nor doth quit your cost,
But all your pains and charges on them's lost,
Hearken to me, Ile teach you how to get
More profit by them, than if they were set
At higher Rents than what your Tenants pay
For your most fertile Lands; and here's the way
Think when you view them, why the Lord hath chose
These, as (1) Emblems to decipher those

(1) Ezc. 47. 11.

That

That under Gospel-grace grow worse and (2) worse;
For means are fruitless; where the Lord doth (3) curse.
Sweet showers descend, the Sun his beams reflects
On both (4) alike; but not with like effects.
Observe, and see how after the sweet showers
The grass and corn (5) revive; the fragrant (6) flowers
Shoot forth their beauteous heads, the valleys (7) sing,
All fresh, and green as in the verdant spring.
But rocks are barren still, and (8) bogs are so;
Where nought but flags, (9) and worthless rushes grow.
Upon these marish grounds there lyes this curse,
The more rain falls; by so much more the worse.
Even so the (1) dews of grace, that sweetly fall,
From Gospel (2) clouds, are not (3) alike to all.
The gracious soul doth (4) germinate and bud,
But to the Reprobate it doth (5) no good.
He's like the withered (6) fig-tree void of fruit;
A fearful curse hath smote his very (7) root.
The heart's made fat, the (9) eyes with blindness seal'd;
The piercingst truths the Gospel ere reveal'd,
Shall be to him but as the Sun and rain
Are to obdurate rocks: (10) fruitless and vain.
Be this your meditation when you walk
By rocks, and fenny grounds, thus learn to talk
With your own souls: and let it make you fear
Lest that's your case that is described here.
This is the best improvement you can make.
Of such bad ground: good soul, I pray thee take
Some pains about them; though they barren be,
Thou seest how they may yield sweet fruits to thee.

(2) 2 Tim. 3. 13.
(3) Heb. 6. 8.
(4) Mat. 5. 45.
(5) 2 Sam. 23. 4.
(6) Cant. 2. 12.
(7) Psal. 65. 13.
(8) Eze. 47. 11.
(9) Job 8. 11.
(1) Deut. 22. 2.
(2) Isa. 5. 6.
(3) 2 Cor. 2. 16.
(4) Psa. 92. 13.
(5) Isa. 6. 9, 10.
(6) Mar. 11. 20.
(7) Isa. 5. 24.
(9) Isa. 6. 10.
(10) Luk. 8. 14. Jer. 17. 5, 6.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The Plowman guides his Plow with care and skill.
So doth the Spirit, in ſound conviction ſtill.

Upon the plowing of Corn-land.

OBSERVATION.

חָרַשׁ

IT requires not only ſtrength, but much skill and judgment, to manage and guide the plow. The Hebrew word which we tranſlate to plow, ſignifies to be intent, as an Artificer is about ſome curious piece of work. The plow muſt neither go too ſhallow nor too deep in the earth; it muſt not indent the ground by making crooked furrows, nor leap and make baulks in good ground; but be guided as to a juſt depth of earth, ſo to caſt the furrow in a ſtraight line, that the floor or ſurface of the field may be made plain. As it is *Iſa.* 28. 25. And hence that expreſſion, *Luke* 9. 62. *He that puts his hand to the plow, and looks back, is not fit for the Kingdom of Heaven.* The meaning is, that as he that plows, muſt have his eyes alwayes forward, to guide and direct his hand in caſting the furrows ſtraight and even; (for his hand will be quickly out when his eye is off:) So he that heartily reſolves for heaven, muſt addict himſelf wholly and intently to the buſineſs of Religion, and not have his mind intangled with the things of this world, which he hath left behind him; whereby it appears, that the right management of the plow, requires as much skill as ſtrength.

APPLICATION.

THis Obſervation in *nature*, ſerves excellently to ſhadow forth this propoſition in *Divinity*. That the work of the Spirit in convincing and humbling the heart of a ſinner, is a work wherein much of the wiſdom, as well as power of God is diſcovered. The work of repentance and ſaving contri-

Glaſſius Rhet. ſacra, p. 300.

Caryl on Job, Chap. 4. v. 8.

contrition, is ſet forth in Scripture by this Metaphor of plowing, *Jer.* 4. 3. *Hoſ.* 10. 12: *Plow up your fallow ground*; that is, be convinced, humbled, and broken hearted for ſin. And the reſemblance betwixt both theſe works, appears in the following particulars.

(1) 'Tis a hard and difficult work to plow, it's reckoned one of the painfulleſt manual labours. It is alſo a very hard thing to convince and humble the heart of a ſecure, ſtout, and proud ſinner, indurate in wickedneſs. What *Luther* ſaith of a dejected ſoul, *That it is as eaſie to raiſe the dead as to comfort ſuch a one.* The ſame I may ſay of the ſecure, confident ſinner. 'Tis as eaſie to rend the rocks, as to work ſaving contrition upon ſuch a heart. *Citius ex pumice aquam*; all the melting language and earneſt intreaties of the Goſpel, cannot urge ſuch a heart to ſhed a tear: Therefore it's called a heart of ſtone, *Ezek.* 36. 26. A firm rock, *Amos* 6. 12. *Shall horſes run upon the Rock? will one plow there with Oxen?* yet when the Lord comes in the power of his Spirit, theſe rocks do rend and yield to the power of the word.

(2) The plow pierces deep into the boſome of the earth, makes (as it were) a deep gaſh or wound in the heart of it. So doth the Spirit upon the hearts of Sinners, he pierces their very ſouls by conviction, *Act.* 2. 37. *When they heard this they were pricked* (or pierced point blank) *to the heart. Then the word divides the ſoul and Spirit*, *Heb.* 4. 12. It comes upon the conſcience with ſuch pinching dilemma's, and tilts the ſword of conviction ſo deep into their ſouls, that there is no ſtenching the bloud, no healing this wound, till Chriſt himſelf come and undertake the cure. *Hæret lateri lethalis arundo*; this barbed arrow cannot be pulled out of their hearts by any but the hand that ſhot it in. Diſcourſe with ſuch a ſoul about his troubles, and he will tell you, that all the ſorrows that ever he had in this world, loſs of eſtate, health, children, or whatever elſe, are but flea-bitings to this; this ſwallows up all other troubles. See how that Chriſtian *Niobe*, *Luke* 7. 38. is diſſolved into tears. *Now deep calleth unto deep at the noiſe of his water ſpouts, when the waves and billows of God go over the ſoul.* Spiritual ſorrows are deep waters, in which the

Κατανύγησαν *punctim cedo pungendo penetro.*

the ſtouteſt and moſt magnanimous ſoul would ſink and drown, did not *Jeſus Chriſt* by a ſecret and ſupporting hand, hold it up by the chin.

(3.) The plow rends the earth in parts and pieces, which before was united, and makes thoſe parts hang looſe, which formerly lay cloſe. Thus doth the ſpirit of conviction rend in ſunder the heart, and its moſt beloved luſts, *Joel.* 2. 13. *Rent your hearts, and not your garments*; that is, rather then your garments; for the ſenſe is comparative, though the expreſſion be negative. And this rending implyes, not only acute pain; fleſh cannot be rent aſunder without anguiſh, nor yet only force and violence; the heart is a ſtubborn and knotty piece, and will not eaſily yield, but it alſo implies a diſ-union of parts united: as when a garment, or the earth, or any continuous body is rent; thoſe parts are ſeparated which formerly cleaved together. Sin and the Soul were glewed faſt together before, there was no parting of them, they would as ſoon part with their lives, as with their *luſts*; but now when the heart is rent for them truely, it is alſo rent from them everlaſtingly, *Ezek.* 7. 15. to 19.

(4) The plow turns up, and diſcovers ſuch things as lay hid in the boſome of the earth before, and were covered under a fair green ſurface, from the eyes of men. Thus when the Lord plows up the heart of a ſinner by conviction, then the ſecrets of his heart are made manifeſt, 2 *Cor.* 14. 24, 25. the moſt ſecret and ſhameful ſins will then out; *for the word of God is quick and powerful, ſharper than any two edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing of the ſoul and ſpirit, the joynts and marrow, and is a quick diſcerner of the thoughts and ſecret intents of the heart*, Heb. 4. 12. It makes the fire burn inwardly, ſo that the ſoul hath no reſt till confeſſion give a vent to trouble. Fain would the ſhuffling ſinner conceal and hide his ſhame, but the word follows him through all his ſinful ſhifts, and brings him at laſt to be his own, both accuſer, witneſs and judge.

(5) The work of the plow is but *opus ordinabile*: a preparative work in order to fruit. Should the Husbandman plow his ground never ſo often, yet if the ſeed be not caſt in

and quickned, in vain is the Harveſt expected. Thus conviction alſo is but a preparative to a farther work upon the ſoul of a ſinner. If it ſtick there, and go no farther, it proves but an abortive or untimely birth. Many have gone thus far, and there they have ſtuck; they have been like a field plowed, but not ſowed, which is a matter of trembling conſideration; for hereby their ſin is greatly aggravated, and their eternal miſery ſo much the more increaſed. O when a poor damned creature ſhall with horror reflect upon himſelf in hell, how near was I once under ſuch a Sermon, to converſion? My ſins were ſet in order before me, my conſcience awakened and terrified with the guilt of them; many purpoſes and reſolves I had then to turn to God, which had they been perfected by anſwerable executions, I had never come to this place of torment; but there I ſtuck, and that was my eternal undoing. Many ſouls have I known ſo terrified with the guilt of ſin, that they have come roaring under horrors of conſcience to the Preacher; ſo that one would think ſuch a breach had been made between them and ſin, as could never be reconciled; and yet, as angry as they were in that fit with ſin, they have hug'd and imbraced them again.

(6) 'Tis beſt plowing when the earth is prepared and mollified by the ſhowers of rain, then the work goes on ſweetly and eaſily. And never doth the heart ſo kindly melt, as when the Goſpel clouds diſſolve, and the free grace and love of *Jeſus Chriſt* comes ſweetly ſhowring down upon it; then it relents and mourns ingeniouſly, *Ezek.* 16. 63. That *thou mayeſt remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou haſt done.* So it was with that poor penitent, *Luke* 7. 38. when the Lord Jeſus had diſcovered to her the ſuper-abounding riches of his grace, in the pardon of her manifold abominations; her heart melted within her, ſhe waſhed the feet of *Chriſt* with tears. And indeed, there is as much difference betwixt the tears which are forced by the terrors of the law, and thoſe which are extracted by the grace of the Goſpel, as there is betwixt thoſe of a condemned malefactor, who weeps to conſider the miſery he is under

der, and thoſe of a pardoned malefactor, that receives his pardon at the foot of the ladder, and is melted by the mercy and clemency of his gracious Prince towards him.

(7) The plow kills thoſe ranck weeds that grow in the field, turns them up by the roots, buries and rots them. So doth ſaving conviction kill ſin at the root, makes the ſoul ſick of it, begets indignation in the heart againſt it, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. The word there ſignifies the riſing of the ſtomack, and being angry even unto ſickneſs; Religious wrath is the fierceſt wrath, now the ſoul cannot endure ſin, trembles at it. *I find a woman more bitter than death* (ſaith penitent *Solomon*) *Eccl.* 7. 26. Conviction like a ſurfet, makes the ſoul to loath what it formerly loved and delighted in.

Ἀγανάκτησιν.

(8) That field is not well plowed, where the plow jumps and skips over good ground, and makes baulks, it muſt turn up the whole field alike; and that heart is not ſavingly convicted where any luſt is ſpared and left untouched. Saving Conviction extends it ſelf to all ſins, not only to ſin in general, with this cold confeſſion, *I am a ſinner*? but to the particulars of ſin, yea, to the particular circumſtances and aggravations of time, place, manner, occaſions, thus and thus have I done; to the ſin of *nature*, as well as *practiſe*, *behold I was ſhapen in iniquity*, *Pſal.* 51. 5. There muſt be no *baulking* of any ſin; the ſparing of one ſin, is a ſure argument thou art not truely humbled for any ſin. So far is the convinced ſoul from a ſtudious concealment of a beloved ſin, that it weeps over that, more than over any other actual ſin.

(9) New ground is much more eaſily plowed than that which by long lying out of tillage, is more conſolidated and clung together, by deep rooted thorns and brambles, which render it difficult to the Plowman. This old ground is like an old ſinner, that hath layn a long time hardening under the means of grace. O the difficulty of convincing ſuch a perſon! Sin hath got ſuch rooting in his heart, he is ſo habituated to the reproofs and calls of the word, that few ſuch are wrought upon. How many young perſons are called, to one obdurate, inveterate ſinner? I do not ſay but God may call home ſuch a ſoul at the eleventh hour; but I may ſay of theſe com-

compared with others, as *Solomon* speaks, *Eccles.* 7. 28. *One man among a thousand have I found*, &c. Few that have long resisted the Gospel, that come afterwards to feel the saving efficacy thereof.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The true Converts Reflection.

O Grace, for ever to be admired! that God should send forth his Word and Spirit to plow up my hard and stony heart! yea, mine, when he hath left so many of more tender, ingenious, sweet, and melting tempers without any culture or meanes of grace. O blessed Gospel! heart dissolving voice! I have felt thine efficacy, I have experienced thy divine and irresistible power; thou art indeed sharper than any two edged sword, and woundest to the heart; but thy wounds are the wounds of a friend. All the wounds thou hast made in my soul, were so many doors opened to let in Christ, all the blows thou gavest my conscience, were but to beat off my soul from sin, which I embraced and had retained to my everlasting ruine, hadst thou not separated them and me. O wise and merciful Physitian, thou didst indeed bind me with cords of conviction and sorrow; but it was only to cut out that stone in my heart, which had killed me if it had continued there. O, how did I struggle and oppose thee, as if thou hadst come with the sword of an enemy, rather than the lance and probe of a skilful and tender hearted Physician? Blessed be the day wherein my sin was discovered and imbittered! O happy sorrows which prepared for such matchless joyes! O blessed hand which turned my salt waters into pleasant wine! and after many pangs and sorrows of soul didst bring forth the man-child of deliverance and peace.

2. The stuborn hearts Reflection.

But O, what a Rock of Adamant is this heart of mine that never yet was wounded and savingly pierced for sin by the terrors of the Law, or melting voice of the Gospel! long have I sate under the word, but when did I feel a relenting pang? O my soul! my stupified soul! thou hast got an *Antidote* against repentance, but hast thou any against hell? thou canst keep out the sense of sin now, but art thou able

able to keep off the terrors of the Lord hereafter? If thou couldst turn a deaf ear to the sentence of Christ in the day of judgment, as easily as thou dost to the intreaties of Christ in the day of grace, it were somewhat; but surely there is no defence against that. Ah, fool that I am, to quench these convictions, unless I knew how to quench those flames they warn me of.

3. The Miscarrying souls Reflection.

And may not I challenge the first place among all the mourners in the world, who have lost all those convictions which at several times came upon me under the word? I have been often awakened by it, and filled with terrors and tremblings under it; but those troubles have soon worn off again, and my heart (like water removed from the fire) return'd to its native coldness. Lord, what a dismal case am I in? Many convictions have I choaked and strangled, which it may be shall never more be revived, until thou revive them against me in judgment. I have been in pangs, and brought forth nothing but wind; my troubles have wrought no deliverance, neither have my lusts fallen before them, my conscience indeed hath been sometimes sick with sin, yea, so sick as to vomit them up by an external partial reformation: but then with the dog have I returned again to my vomit, and now I doubt am given over to an heart that cannot repent. Oh that those travelling pangs could be quickened again! but alas! they are ceased. I am like a prisoner escaped, and again recovered, whom the Jaylor loads with double Irons. Surely, O my soul! if thy spiritual troubles return not again, they are but gone back, to bring eternal troubles. It is with thee, O my soul! as with a man whose bones have been broken and not well set; who must, (how terrible soever it appear to him) endure the pain of breaking and setting them again, if ever he be made a sound man. O that I might rather chuse to be the Object of thy wounding mercy, than of thy sparing cruelty! if thou plow not up my heart again by compunction, I know it must be rent in pieces at last by desperation.

The

The Poem.

(1) Iſa. 28. 25. 26.
(2) Mat. 13. 5.
(3) Mat. 13. 4.
(4) Mat. 13. 38.
(5) Act. 2. 37.
(6) 2 Cor. 6. 1.
(7) 1 Cor. 3. 5.
(8) Phil. 1. 6.
(1) Joh. 16. 8.
(2) 1 Theſ. 2. 19
(3) Luk. 15. 11.
(4) 2 Cor. 9. 10, 11.
(5) Mat. 13. 6.
(6) 1 Theſ. 1. 5.
(7) Mar. 8. 14.
(8) Heb. 6. 5.
(9) Luk. 8. 14.
(1) Pſal. 126. 6.

THere's (1) skill in plowing, that the Plowman knows
For if too (2) ſhallow, or too deep he goes;
The ſeed is either buried, or elſe may
To (3) Rooks and Daws become an eaſie prey.
This as a lively emblem, fitly may
Deſcribe the bleſſed ſpirits work and way:
Whoſe work on ſouls, with this doth ſymbolize;
Betwixt them both, thus the reſemblance lyes.
Souls are the (4) ſoyl, conviction is the (5) plow.
Gods workmen (6) draw, the ſpirit ſhews them how.
He guides the work, and in good ground, doth (7) bleſs
His workmens paines, with ſweet and fair ſucceſs.
The heart prepar'd, he ſcatters in the ſeed
Which in it's ſeaſon ſprings, no fowl nor weed
Shall pick it up, or choak this ſpringing corn;
Till it be (8) houſed in the heavenly barn.
When thus (1) the ſpirit plows up the fallow ground,
When with ſuch fruits, his ſervants work is (2) crown'd;
Let all the (3) friends of Chriſt, and ſoul ſay now;
As they paſs by theſe fields (4) *God ſpeed the plow.*
Sometimes this plow (5) thin, ſhelly ground doth turn.
That little ſeed which ſprings, the Sun-beams burn.
The reſt uncovered lies, which fowls devour,
Alas! their hearts were (6) touched, but not with power.
The (7) cares and pleaſures of this world have drown'd
The ſeed, before it peep'd above the ground,
Some ſprings indeed, the (8) ſcripture ſaith that ſome
Do taſte the powers of the world to come.
Theſe (9) Embroy's never come to timely birth,
Becauſe the ſeed that's ſown wants depth of earth.
Turn up, O God, the bottom of my heart;
And to the ſeed that's ſown, do thou impart
Thy choiceſt bleſſing. Though I (1) weep and mourn;
In this wet ſeed-time; if I may return

Wit

With sheaves of joy; these fully will reward
My paines, and sorrows, be they ne're so hard.

CHAP. VIII.

The Choicest wheat is still reserv'd for seed,
But gracious principles are Choice indeed.

Upon the seed Corn.

OBSERVATION.

HUsbandmen are very careful and curious about their Seed-corn, that it may not only be clean and pure, but the best and most excellent in its kind, *Isa.* 28. 25. *He casteth in the principal Wheat.* If any be more full and weighty than other, that is reserved for Seed. 'Tis usual with Husbandmen to pick and lease their Seed-corn by hand, that they may separate the Cockel and Darnel, and all the lighter and hollow grains from it, wherein they manifest their discretion, for according to the vigor and goodness of the Seed, the fruit and production is like to be.

APPLICATION.

THe choice and Principal Seed-corn with which the fields are sowed, after they are prepared for it, doth admirably shadow forth those excellent principles of grace infused into the regenerate soul. Their agreement, as they are both seed, is obvious in the ten following particulars, and their excellency above other principles in seven more.

The earth at first naturally brought forth Corn, and every Seed yielding fruit, without humane industry; but since the curse came upon it, it must be plowed and sowed, or no fruit can be expected. So man at first had all the principles of holiness in his nature, but now they must be infused by regeneration

1.

ration, or elſe his nature is as void of holineſs as the barren and untilled deſart is of Corn.

2. The earlier the Seed is ſown, the better it is rooted and enabled to endure the aſperities of the Winter; ſo when grace is early infuſed, when nature is ſanctified in the bud, grace is thereby exceedingly advantaged. 'Twas *Timothies* ſingular advantage, that he knew the ſcriptures of a Child.

3. Froſts and ſnows conduce very much to the well rooting of the ſeed, and makes it ſpread and take root much the better. So do Sanctified afflictions, which uſually the people of God meet with after their calling, and often in their very Seed-time, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 6. *And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction.* But if they have fair weather then, to be ſure they ſhall meet with weather hard enough afterwards, *Heb.* 10. 32: *But call to remembrance the former dayes, in which after ye were illuminated, ye indured a great fight of afflictions.*

4. When the Seed is caſt into the earth, it muſt be covered up by the harrow; the uſe whereof in Husbandry, is not only to lay a plain floor (as they ſpeak) but to open and let in the Corn to the boſome of the earth, and there cover it up for its ſecurity, from birds that would devour it. Thus doth the moſt wiſe God provide for the ſecurity of that grace, which he at firſt deſſeminated in the hearts of his people. He is as well the finiſher as the Author of their grace, *Heb.* 12. 2. And of this they may be confident, that he that hath begun a good work in them, will perform it unto the day of Chriſt. The care of God over the graces of his people, is like the covering of the ſeed for ſecurity.

5. Seed-Corn is in its own nature, of much more value and worth than other Corn; the Husbandman caſts in the principal wheat. So are the ſeeds of grace ſown in the renewed ſoul; for it's called, *The ſeed of God*, 1 John 3. 9. *The Divine nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. One dram of grace is far beyond all the glory of this world; its more precious than gold which periſhes, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. *The price of it is above rubies, and all that thou canſt deſire is not to be compared with it*, Pro. 3. 15.

There

There is a great deal of Spirit and vigour in a little Seed, though it be small in bulk, yet it is great in vertue and efficacy. Gracious habits are also vigorous and efficatious things. Such is their efficacy that they overcome the world, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4. *Whatsoeve is born of God, overcometh the world.* They totally alter and change the person in whom they are. *He that persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.* They enable the soul to do and suffer great things for God, *Heb.* 11. 33, 34, 35. 6.

The stalk and ear are potentially and virtually in a small grain of Corn. So are all the fruits of obedience which believers afterwards bring forth to God, vertually contained in those habits of seeds of grace. 'Tis strange to consider, that from a mustard-seed (which as Christ saith is the least of all seeds) should grow such great branches, that the birds of the Air may build their nests in them. Surely the heroical and famous acts and atchievements of the most renowned believers sprang from small beginnings at first, to that eminency and glory. 7.

The fruitfulness of the seed depends upon the Sun and rain, by which they are quickened, as is opened largely in the next Chapter. And the principles of grace in us have as necessary a dependance upon the assisting and exciting grace without us. For though it be true, they are immortal seeds; yet that is not so much from their own strength, as from the promises made to them, and that constant influx from above, by which they are revived and preserved from time to time. 8.

The seed is fruitful in some soyls more than in others, prospers much better, and comes sooner to maturity. So doth grace thrive better, and grow faster in some persons than in others. *Your faith groweth exceedingly*, 2 Thes. 1. 3. *Whilst the things that are in others are ready to die*, Rev. 3. 2. Though no mans heart be naturally a kind soyl to grace, yet doubtless grace is more advantaged in some dispositions than in others. 9.

And lastly, their agreement as Seed appears in this, the Seed-corn is scattered into all parts of the field, as proportionably 10.

tionably and equally as may be. So is grace diffus'd into all the faculties, judgment, will, and all the affections are ſowed with theſe new principles, *The God of peace ſanctifie you wholly*, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 23.

And thus you ſee, why principles of grace are called Seed. Now in the next place, (which is the ſecond thing promiſed and mainly deſigned in this Chapter) to ſhew you the choiceneſs and excellency of theſe holy principles with which ſanctified ſouls are embelliſht and adorned, and to convince you that true grace excels all other principles, by which other perſons are acted, even as the principal wheat doth the chaff, and refuſe ſtuff. I ſhall here inſtitute a compariſon betwixt grace, and the moſt ſplendid common gifts in the world, and its tranſcendent excellency above them all will evidently appear in the ſeven following particulars.

1. The moſt excellent common gifts come out of the common treaſury of God's bounty, and that in a natural way, they are but the improvement of a mans natural abilities or (as one calls them) the ſparks of nature blown up by the wind of a more benign and liberal education; but principles of grace are of a divine and heavenly original and extraction not educed or raiſed from nature, but ſupernaturally infuſed by the Spirit from on high, *Joh.* 3. 6. *That which is born of the fleſh is fleſh, and that which is born of the ſpirit is ſpirit.* When a ſoul is ſanctified by them, *he partakes of the divine nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. *is born not of fleſh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God, Joh.* 1. 13. In this reſpect they differ from gifts, as the heavenly Manna which was rained down from heaven, differs from common bread, which by paines and induſtry the earth produces in a natural way.

2. The beſt natural gifts afford not that ſweetneſs and ſolid comfort to the ſoul that grace doth; they are but a dry ſtalk that affords no meat for a ſoul to feed on. A man may have an underſtanding full of light, and an heart void of comfort at the ſame time; but grace is a fountain of pureſt living ſtreams of peace and comfort, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Believing we rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and full of glory: light is ſown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart.* All true pleaſures and

and delights are seminally in grace, *Psal.* 97. 11. they are sown for them in these divine and heavenly graces, which are glory in the bud.

Gifts adorn the person, but do not secure the soul from wrath. A man may be admired for them among men, and rejected eternally by God. Who can considerately read that sixth Chapter of the *Hebrews*, and not tremble to think in what a forlorn case a soul may be, though set off and accomplisht with the rarest endowments of this kind, *Mat.* 7. 22. We read, that many shall say to *Christ* in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, &c. and yet themselves at last cast out as a prey to Devils. How divinely and rhetorically did a *Balaam* speak and prophesie, *Num.* 23. What rare and excellent parts had the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*? Who upon that account were stiled *principes seculi*, the Princes of the world, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. What profound and excellent parts had the Heathen *Sages* and *Philosophers*? These things are so far from securing the soul against the wrath to come, that they often expose it unto wrath, and are as oyl to encrease the eternal burnings, but now gracious principles are the τὰ ἐχόμενα σωτηρίας, as the Apostle calls them, *Heb.* 6. Things that accompany and have salvation in them. These are the things on which the promises of Salvation run; and these treasures are never found but in elect vessels. Glory is by promise assured and made over to him that possesses them. There is but a little point of time, betwixt him and the glorified spirits above. And how inconsiderable a matter is a little time, which contracts and winds up apace? For *now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.* And hence the scriptures speaks of them as already saved, *Rom.* 8. 24. *We are saved by hope*, because its as sure as if we were in heaven. We are made to sit in heavenly places. 3. Like a precious stone in a toads head.

Gifts may damnifie the person that possesses them; and it may be better in respect of a mans own condition he had never had them. *Knowledge* (saith the Apostle) *Puffeth up*, 1 *Cor.* 8. 1. maketh the soul proud and flatulent. 'Tis a hard thing to know much, and not to know it too much. The Saints 4.

knowledge is better than the Schollars; for he hath his own heart inſtead of a Commentary to help him. *Ariſtotle* ſaid a little knowledge about heavenly things, though conjectural, is better than much of earthly things, though certain. *The world by wiſdom knew not God* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21.) (*i. e.*) their learning hanged in their light, they were too wiſe to ſubmit to the ſimplicity of the Goſpel. The excellent parts of the old Hereticks, did but ſerve to midwife into the world the monſtrous birth of ſoul-damning hereſies. *Cupit abs te ornari diabolus*, as *Auſtin* ſaid to that ingenious young Scholler; The devil deſires to be adorned by thee. But now grace in its ſelf is not ſubject to ſuch abuſes, it cannot be the proper *univocal cauſe* of any evil effect: It cannot puff up the heart, but alwayes humbles it; nor ſerve the devils deſigns, but ever oppoſes them.

5. Gifts may be given a man for the ſake of others, and not out of love to himſelf, they are but as an excellent diſh of meat which a man ſends to a nurſe, not for her ſake ſo much as for his Child that ſucks her. God indeed makes uſe of them to do his children good, the Church is benefitted by them, though themſelves are but like Cooks, they prepare excellent diſhes on which the Saints feed, and are nouriſhed, though themſelves taſt them not. They *dona miniſtrantia non ſanctificantia*, miniſtring but not ſanctifying gifts, proceeding not from the good will of God to him that hath them, but to thoſe he benefits by them. And oh, what a ſad conſideration will this be one day to ſuch a perſon, to think, I helped ſuch a ſoul to heaven, while I my ſelf muſt lodg in hell?

6. Sin in the raign and power of it, may cohabit with the moſt excellent natural gifts under the ſame roof, I mean in the ſame heart. A man may have the tongue of an *Angel*, and the heart of a *Devil*. The wiſdome of the *Philoſophers* (ſaith *Lactantius*) *non excindit vitia ſed abſcondit*, did not root out, but hide their vices. The learned *Phariſees* were but painted ſepulchers; gifts are but as a fair glove drawn over a foul hand. But now grace is incompatible with Sin in dominions it purifies the heart, *Act.* 15. 9. cleanſes the conſcience

science, *Heb.* 9. 14. Crucifies the affections and lusts of the flesh, *Gal.* 5. 24. is not content with the concealment, but ruine of corruptions.

Lastly, Gifts must leave us at last. *Whether there be knowledge, that shall cease. All flesh is grass and the goodliness of it as the flower of the grass; the grass withers, the flower fadeth, but the word of the Lord abideth for ever*, Isa. 40. 6, 8. Many times they leave a man before death. One knock, if it hit right (as one saith) may make a wise man a fool, but to be sure, they all leave us at death. *Doth not his excellency which is in him, go away? Job* 4. 21. yea, then all natural excellency departs. Death strips the soul of all those splendid ornaments, then the rhetorical tongue is struck dum; the nimble wit and curious phansie, shall entertain your ears with no more pleasant discourses. *Nunquam jocos dabis*, as *Adrian* said to his departing soul; but grace ascends with the soul into eternity, and there receives its perfection and accomplishment. Gifts take their leave of the soul, as *Orpha* did of *Naomi*; but grace saith, then as *Ruth*, where thou goest I will go, *and where thou lodgest I will lodge, and nothing shall separate thee and me.* Now put all this together and then judge whether the Apostle spake hyperbolyes, when he said, *Covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet I shew unto you a more excellent way*, 1 Cor. 12. *ult.* And thus you have the choiceness of these principles also. 7.

REFLECTIONS.

The lines are fallen to me in a pleasant place, may the gracious soul say. How defective soever I am in gifts yet blessed be the Lord, who hath sown the seeds of true grace in my heart. What though I am not famed and honoured among men, let it suffice me that I am precious in the eyes of the Lord. Though he hath not abounded to me in gifts of nature, *yet blessed be the God and Father of my Lord Jesus Christ who hath abounded to me in all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus*, Eph. 1. 3. Is not a true jewel, though spurn'd in the dirt, more precious than a false one, though set

The gracious souls Reflection.

ſet in gold? Why art thou troubled, O my ſoul, for the want of theſe things which reprobates may have? and art not rather admiring and bleſſing God for thoſe things which none but the darlings and favourites of heaven can have? is not an ounce of pure gold more valuable than many pounds of guilded braſs? what though the dews of *Helicon* deſcend not upon my *head*, if in the mean time the ſweet influences of *Sion* fall upon my *heart*? O my God! how much ſoever others are elated by the light of their knowledge, I have cauſe with humility to adore thee for the heavenly heat with which thou haſt warmed my affections.

The deceived ſouls Reflection.

Pauſe a while my ſoul upon this point. With what ſeed is my heart ſown, and of what kind are thoſe things wherein I excel others? are they indeed ſpeciall ſeeds of grace, or common gifts and naturall excellencies? If the latter, little cauſe have I to pride my ſelf in them, were they ten thouſand times more then they are. If theſe things be indeed the things that accompany ſalvation, the ſeed of God, the true and real work of grace, Then (1) how comes it to paſs that I never found any throws or travelling pangs in the production of them? Its affirmed, and generally acknowledged that the new creature is never brought forth without ſuch pains, and compunctions of heart, *Act.* 2. 37. I have indeed often felt an aking *head*, whilſt I have read and ſtudied to increaſe my knowledge; but when did I feel an aking *heart* for ſin? Oh, I begin to ſuſpect, that it is not right. Yea, (2) and my ſuſpition increaſes whiles I conſider that. grace is of an humbling nature, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. Lord, how have I been elated by my gifts and valued my ſelf above what was meet? O how have I delighted in the noiſe of the *Phariſees* trumpet! *Mat.* 6. 2. No muſick ſo ſweet as that. Say, O my conſcience, have I not delighted more in the Theater, than the cloſet? in the praiſe of men, than the approbation of God? Oh, how many evidences doſt thou produce againſt me? Indeed theſe are ſad ſymptoms that I have ſhewed thee, but there is yet another which renders thy caſe more ſuſpitious yet; yea, that which thou canſt make no rational defence againſt, even the ineffectualneſs of all thy

gifts

gifts and knowledge to mortifie any one of all thy lusts. It's beyond all dispute, that gifts may, but grace cannot consist without mortification of sin, *Gal.* 5. 24. Now what lust hath fallen before these excellent parts of mine? Doth not pride, passion, covetousness, and indeed the whole body of sin live and thrive in me as much as ever? Lord, I yield the cause, I can defend it no longer against my conscience, which casts and condemns me by full proof, to be but in a wretched, cursed lamentable state, notwithstanding all my knowledg and flourishing gifts. O shew me a more excellent way Lord! that I had the sincerity of the poorest Saint; though I should lose the applause of all my parts: with these I see I may go to hell, but without some better thing, no hope of heaven.

The Poem.

GReat difference betwixt that seed is found,
With which you sow your several plots of ground.
Seed-wheat doth far excel in (1) dignity, (1) Isa.28.25.
The cheaper Barley, and the courser Rye.
Though in themselves they good and wholsome are;
Yet these with choicest wheat may not compare,
Mens hearts like fields are sowed with different grain;
Some baser, some more noble; some again
Excelling (2) both the former: more than wheat (2)Prov.11.26
Excels that grain, your swine, and horses eat.
For principles of meer morality,
Like Cummin, Barley, Fitches, Pease, or Rye:
In those mens hearts are often to be found,
Whom yet the Scripture calleth (3) cursed ground. (3)Mat.19.20.
And nobler principles than these sometime
Cal'd (4) common grace, and spiritual gifts which shine (4) Heb. 6. 9.
In some mens heads, where is their habitation;
Yet they are no companions of Salvation.
These purchase (5) honour both from great and small; (5)1 Cor.1.26.
But I must tell thee that if this be all; Though

(6) 1 Cor. 13. 1. Though like an (6) Angel in theſe gifts thou ſhine,
Amongſt blind mortals, for a little time:
The day's at hand, when ſuch as thou muſt take
(7) Mat. 7 22. Thy lot with (7) devils in th'infernal lake.
But principles of ſpecial ſaving grace,
(8) Rom. 10. 10 Whoſe ſeat is in the (8) heart, not head or face:
Like ſollid wheat, ſown in a fruitful field
Shall ſpring and flouriſh, and at laſt will yield
(9) Gal. 6. 8. A glorious (9) harveſt of eternal reſt,
To him that nouriſh'd them within his breaſt.
O grace! how orient art thou! how divine!
What is the glory of all (1) gifts to thine!
(1) 1 Cor. 12. 31. Diſſeminate this ſeed within my heart,
My God I pray thee, though thou ſhouldſt impart
The leſs of gifts; then I may truly ſay,
That thou haſt ſhew'd me, the more excellent way.

CHAP. IX.

Upon ſpringing weather afte Seed time

By heavens influence, Corn and plants do ſpring,
Gods ſhowers of grace do make his valleys ſing.

OBSERVATION.

THE earth after that it is plowed and ſowed, muſt be watered and warm'd with the dews and influences of heaven, or no fruit can be expected. If God do not open to you his good treaſure, the heavens to give rain unto the Land in its ſeaſon, and bleſs all the work of your hands, as it is, *Deut.* 28. 12. The earth cannot yield her increaſe. The order and dependance of natural cauſes in the productions of fruit, is excellently deſcribed, *Hoſ.* 2. 21. 22. *I will hear the heavens, and they ſhall hear the earth; and the earth ſhall hear the corn, and wine, and Oyl, and they ſhall hear* Jezreel. *Jezreel* muſt

muſt have corn, and wine, and Oyl, or they cannot live; they cannot have it, unleſs the earth bring it forth, the earth cannot bring it forth without the heavens, the heavens cannot yield a drop unleſs God hear them; that is; unlock and open them. * Nature and natural cauſes are nothing elſe but the order in which God works. This ſome *Heathens* by the light of nature acknowledged, and therefore when they went to plow in the morning, they did lay one hand upon the plow (to ſpeak their own part to be painfulneſs) and hold up the other hand to *Ceres* the Goddeſs of Corn, to ſhew, that their expectation of plenty was from their ſuppoſed Deity. I fear many *Chriſtians* lay both hands to the plow, and ſeldom lift up heart or hand to God, when about that work. There was an husbandman (ſaith Mr. *Smith*) that alwayes ſowed good Seed, but never had good Corn; at laſt a neighbour came to him, and ſaid, I will tell you what probably may be the cauſe of it? It may be (ſaid he) you do not ſteep your Seed; no truly, ſaid the other, nor ever did I hear that Seed muſt be ſteeped; yes ſurely, ſaid his neighbour, and I will tell you how, it muſt be ſteeped in prayer. When the party heard this, he thanked him for his counſel, reformed his fault, and had as good Corn as any man whatſoever. Surely, it is not the Husbandmans, but God ſteps that drop fatneſs. *Alma Mater terra*, the earth indeed is a fruitful mother, but the rain which fecundates and fertilizes it, hath no other father but God, *Job* 38. 28.

* *Natura nihil aliud eſt quam divinorum operum ordo.* Brentius.

Weems Cerem. Law.

Smiths Eſſex Dove.

APPLICATION.

AS impoſſible it is (in an ordinary way) for ſouls to be made fruitful in grace and holineſs, without the dews and influences of Ordinances and the bleſſing of God upon them, as for the earth to yield her fruit without the natural influences of heaven; for look, what dews, ſhowers, and cleer ſhinings after rain are to the fields, that the word and Ordinances of God are to the ſouls of men. *My doctrine ſhall drop as the rain, my ſpeech ſhall diſtil as the dew, as the ſmall rain upon the tender herb, and as the ſhowers upon the graſs,* Deut.

Deut. 32. 2. *For as the rain and ſnow cometh down from heaven and watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud; ſo ſhall my word be that goeth forth of my mouth*, Iſa. 55. 10, 11. And as the doctrine of the Goſpel is rain, ſo Goſpel Miniſters are the clouds in which thoſe heavenly vapours are bound up. The reſemblance lyes in the following particulars.

1. The rain comes from heaven, *Acts* 14. 17. *He gave us rain from heaven and fruitful ſeaſons*, &c. The doctrine of the Goſpel is alſo of an heavenly extraction and deſcent, they are heavenly truths which are brought to you in earthen veſſels things that were hid in God, and come from his boſom, *Eph.* 3. 9. What *Nicodemus* ſaid of *Chriſt*, is in a proportion true of every faithful diſpenſer of the Goſpel, *Thou art a teacher come from God*, Joh. 3. 2. You are not to look upon the truths which Miniſters deliver, as the meer effects and fruits of their inventions and parts, they are but the Conduits through which thoſe celeſtial waters are conveyed to you. 'Tis all heavenly, the *Officers* from heaven, *Eph.* 4. 12. Their *Doctrine* from heaven, *Eph.* 3. 8, 9. The *efficacy* and *ſucceſs* of it from heaven, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. *What I received of the Lord* (ſaith *Paul*) *that have I delivered unto you*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 23. The ſame may every Goſpel Miniſter ſay too. That's the firſt.

2. And then (2ly) The rain falls by divine direction and appointment; *He cauſes it to rain upon one city and not upon another*, Amos, 4. 7. You ſhall often ſee a cloud diſſolve and ſpend it ſelf upon one place, when there is not a drop within a few miles of it. Thus is the Goſpel ſent to ſhed its rich influences upon one place, and not upon another; It pours down ſhowers of bleſſings upon one Town or Pariſh, whilſt others are dry like the ground which lay neer to *Gideons* wet fleece. *To you is the word of this ſalvation ſent*, Act. 13. 26. *Sent*, it comes not by *chance*, but by *Commiſſion* and appointment, and its ſent *to you* by ſpecial direction. Miniſters can no more go whither they pleaſe, than the ſailing clouds can move againſt the wind. *Paul* and *Timothy*, two fruitful clouds (that ſent down many ſweet refreſhing ſhowers upon every

place whither they came) the Lord ſent them through *Phrygia* and *Galatia* but forbad them to preach the word in *Aſia*, *Acts.* 16. 6. And when they eſſayed to go into *Bithynia*, the ſpirit ſuffered them not, *v.* 7. But a man of *Macedonia* appears to *Paul* in a viſion, and prayed him, ſaying, come over to *Macedonia* and help us, *v.* 9. Thus you ſee, how the *myſtical*, as well as the *natural* clouds, are moved according to divine counſel; and though Miniſters are not now diſpoſed to their reſpective places, in ſuch an extraordinary way, yet there is ſtill a ſpecial hand of the Spirit guiding their motions, which is ſeen partly in qualifying them or ſuch a people, and partly in drawing out their hearts to elect and call them, and inclining their hearts to accept the call.

3. There is a great deal of difference in the ſhowers of rain that fall upon the earth. Sometimes you have an haſty ſhower, which makes the wayes fleet, and the ſtreets run, but it's gone preſently, the earth hath but little benefit by it; and ſometimes you have a ſweet, gentle, ſoaking rain, that moderately ſoaks to the root and refreſhes the earth abundantly. This is called *the ſmall rain*, and the former, *the great rain of his ſtrength*, *Job* 37. 6. So it is in theſe ſpiritual ſhowers, the effects of ſome ſermons, (like a ſudden ſpout of rain) are very tranſient; that touch the heart a little for preſent by way of conviction or comfort, but it fleets away immediately, *Jam.* 1. 23. At other times the Goſpel like a ſetled moderate rain, ſoaks to the root, to the very heart. So did that ſweet ſhower which fell, *Acts* 2. 37. It ſearcheth the root, it went to the heart; the influences of it are ſometimes abiding, and do much longer remain in, and refreſh the heart, than the rain doth the earth. There be effects left in ſome hearts, by ſome Ser mons and duties, that will never out of it ſo long as they live. *I will never forget thy precepts, for by them thou haſt quickened me*, *Pſal.* 119. 92.

4. The rain is moſt beneficial to the earth, when there come ſweet, warm Sun-blaſts with it, or after it. This the ſcripture calls, *a clear ſhining after rain*, 2 *Sam.* 23. 4. by which the *ſeminal vertue* of the earth is drawn forth, and then the herbs and flowers, and Corn ſprout abundantly. So it is with

Goſpel ſhowers, when the Sun of righteouſneſs opens upon poor ſouls under the word, darting down the beams of grace and love upon them, whilſt they are attending on it, (juſt as you ſometimes ſee a ſweet ſhower fall while the Sun ſhines out) O how comfortable is this! and effectual to melt the heart! and as the warm rain is moſt refreſhing, ſo when the word comes warmly, from the melting affections of the Preacher, who imparts not only the Goſpel, but his own ſoul with it, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 8. This doth abundantly more good than that which drops coldly from the lips of the unaffected ſpeaker.

5. Showers of rain do exceedingly refreſh the earth, as a man is refreſhed by a draught of water, when his ſpirits are even ſpent. O how welcome is a ſhower to the thirſty ground! Hence the little hills are ſaid to rejoyce on every ſide, yea to ſhout for joy, and ſing when a ſhower comes, *Pſal.* 65. 12, 13. but never was ſhower of rain ſo ſweetly refreſhing to the thirſty earth, as Goſpel-ſhowers are to gracious hearts, *Col.* 4. 8. It comforts their very hearts. What joy was there in *Samaria*, when the Goſpel came to that place? *Acts* 8. 8. It revives the ſoul, its *mel in ore, melos in aure, jubilum in corde*, honey in the mouth, melody in the ear, and a very Jubilee in the heart.

6. Rain is neceſſary at Seed-time, to make ready the earth, to receive the Seed, *Pſal.* 65. 9, 10. *Thou viſiteſt the earth, and watereſt it; thou greatly enricheſt it with the river of God, which is full of water; thou prepareſt them corn, when thou haſt ſo provided for it; thou watereſt the ridges thereof abundantly, thou ſettleſt the furrows thereof, thou makeſt it ſoft with ſhowers, thou bleſſeſt the ſpringing thereof.* And this the Scripture calls the former rain. And as this is neceſſary about Seed-time, ſo the latter rain is as needful about earing-time, to diſcloſe the ear, and to bring it to perfection; both theſe are great bleſſings to the earth, and conduce to a plentiful harveſt, *Joel* 2. 23, 24. *Be glad then ye Children of Sion, and rejoyce in the Lord your God, for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cauſe to come down for you the rain, the former and the latter rain in the firſt month, and the floors ſhall be full of*

wheat,

wheat, and the faces shall overflow with wine and Oyl. Thus the Gospel hath a double use and benefit also. It's necessary as the former rain at Seed-time, it causes the first spring of grace in the heart, *Psal.* 19.7. And there could be, (in an ordinary way) no spring of grace without it, *Prov.* 29.18. And as this former rain is necessary to cause the first spring of grace, so also it hath the use of the latter rain to ripen those precious fruits of the Spirit in the souls of Believers, *Eph.* 4.11, 12, 13. *He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Were all the elect* converted unto God, yet still there would be a necessity of a Gospel Ministry.

7. After a great glut of rain, usually there comes a drought; 'tis a common Countrey Proverb *Wet and dry pay one another.* And truly when a people are glutted with a fulness of Gospel-mercies, it's usual with God to shut up and restrain the Gospel-clouds, that for a time (at least) there be no dews upon them, and thereby teach them to prize their despised (because common) mercies at an higher rate. For as a good man once said, mercies are best known by the back, and most prized when most wanted. *In those dayes the word of the Lord was precious, there was no open vision,* 1 *Sam.* 3.1. It is with spiritual as with temporal food, slighted when plenteous, but if a famine once come, then every bit of bread is precious. *Jerusalem* remembred in the dayes of her affliction, and of her misery, all her pleasant things that she had in the dayes of old, *Lam.* 1.7. 'Tis both a sinful and dangerous thing to wantonize with Gospel-mercies, and despise the plainest (if faithful) Ministers of the Gospel. The time may come when you may be glad of the plainest Sermon, from the mouth of the meanest Embassador of Christ.

8. To conclude, the prayers of Saints are the keys that open and shut the natural clouds, and cause them either to give out,

our, or with-hold their influences, *James* 5. 18. *Elias was a man ſubject to like paſſions as we are, and he prayed earneſtly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth, by the ſpace of three years and ſix months; and he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth fruit.* God hath ſubjected the works of his hands, to the prayers of his Saints, *Iſa.* 45. 11.

Prayer is alſo the golden key which opens theſe myſtical Goſpel clouds, and diſſolves them into ſweet gracious ſhowers. God will have the whole work of the Miniſtry carried on by the prayers of his people, they firſt obtain their Miniſters by prayer, *Luke* 10. 2. *Pray ye the Lord of the Harveſt to ſend forth labourers into the vineyard.* It is by the help of prayer, that they are carried on, and enabled to exerciſe their Miniſtry. They may tell their people as a great General once told his Souldiers. *That he flew upon their wings. Pray for me* (ſaith the great Apoſtle) *that utterance may be given me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the Myſteries of the Goſpel,* Eph. 6. 19. Yea, by the Saints prayers it is, that Miniſters obtain the ſucceſs and fruits of their labours, *Theſſ.* 3. 1. *Finally brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free courſe, and be glorified, even as it is with you.* And thus you have the Metaphor opened. Now, Oh! that theſe truths migh come down in ſweet ſhowers upon the hearts both of Miniſters and people, in the following Reflections.

3. Reflections for Goſpel-Miniſters.

1.

REFLECTIONS.

Am I then a cloud? and is my doctrine as rain to water the Lords inheritance? and yet do I think it much to be toſſed up and down by the furious winds and ſtorms of perſecution? do I not ſee the clouds above me in continual motions and agitations? and ſhall I dream of a fixed ſetled ſtate? No falſe Teachers, who are clouds without rain, are more likely to enjoy that, than I. Which of all the Prophets have not been toſſed and hurried worſe than I? *Acts* 7. 52. He that will not let men alone to be quiet in their luſts, muſt

ex-

expect but little quiet from men in this *life*. But it is enough Lord, that areſt remaineth for thy ſervant, let me be ſo wiſe to ſecure a reſt to come, and not ſo vain to expect it on earth.

2. And, O that I might ſtudy thoſe inſtructing clouds, from which, as from the bottles of heaven, God pours down refreſhing ſhowers to quench and ſatisfie the thirſty earth! in this may I reſemble them, and come amongſt the people of the Lord, *in the fulneſs of the bleſſing of the Goſpel of Chriſt*, *Rom.* 15. 29. O let not thoſe thirſty ſouls that wait for me as for the rain, *Job* 29. 23. *Return like the Troops of* Tema, *aſhamed with their heads covered*, Job 6. 19. O that my lips might refreſh many! let me never be like thoſe empty clouds, which deceive the hopes of thirſty ſouls; but let my doctrine deſcend as the rain and diſtil as the dew, and let that plot of thine inheritance which thou haſt aſſigned to me, be as the field which the Lord hath bleſſed.

3. Once more, lift up thine eyes to the clouds, and behold, to how great an height the Sun hath mounted them, for by reaſon of their ſublimity it is that they are called the clouds of heaven, *Mat.* 24. 30 Lord, let me be a cloud of heaven too! Let my heart and converſation be both there! who is more advantaged for an heavenly life than I? heavenly truths are the ſubjects of my daily ſtudy, and ſhall earthly things be the objects of my daily delights and loves? God forbid, that ever my earthly converſation ſhould contradict and ſhame my heavenly calling and profeſſion. Shine forth thou glorious Sun of righteouſneſs, and my heart ſhall quickly be attracted and mounted above theſe viſible clouds, yea, and above the aſpectable heavens.

3 Reflections for private Chriſtians.

1. For thoſe that want a Goſpel-Miniſtry.

Is the Goſpel rain, and its Miniſters clouds? Wo is me then, that my habitation is upon the mountains of *Gilboa*, where there are no dews! Ah ſad lot, that I ſhould be like *Gideons* dry fleece, whilſt the ground round about me is wet with the dew of heaven! O thou that commandeſt the clouds above, and openeſt the windows of heaven; remember, and refreſh this parched wilderneſs, wherein I live, with ſhowers o grace, that we may not be as the heath in the deſart;

desart, which seeth not when good cometh, nor inhabit the parched places of the wilderness.

2. For those that enjoy a Gospel Ministry.

O Lord, thou hast caused the heavens above me to be black with clouds, thou openest the celestial casements from above, and daily sendest down showers of Gospel-blessings; O that I might be as the parched earth under them! not for barrenness, but for thirstiness. Let me say, *My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord*: that I might there see the beauty of the Lord. Doth the spungy earth so greedily suck up the showers, and open as many mouths as there are clefts in it, to receive what the clouds dispense? and shall those precious soul-inriching showers fleet away unprofitably from me? if so, then,

3. For unprofitable hearers.

What an account have I to make for all those Gospel-blessings that I have injoyed? for all those Gospel-dews and showers wherewith I have been watered! Should I be found fruitless at last, it will fare better with the barren and uncultivated wilderness, than with me, more tolerable for *Indians* and *Barbarians*, that never heard the Gospel, than for me that have been so assiduously and plenteously watered by it. Lord, what a difference wilt thou put in the great day, betwixt simple and pertinacious barrenness! Surely, if my root be not rottenness, such heavenly waterings and influences as these, will make it sprout forth into fruits of obedience.

The Poem.

(1) Isa. 44. 14.
(2) Deut. 28. 12.

THe (1) vegetables here below depend,
Upon those (2) treasures which the heavens do spend
Most bounteously upon them: to preserve
Their being, and their beauty. This may serve
To shadow forth a heavenly mystery,
Which thus presents it self before your eye.

As

As when the Sun draws near us in the ſpring,
All creatures do (3) rejoyce, birds, chirp and ſing.
The face of nature ſmiles, the fields (4) adorn
Themſelves, with rich embroyderies. The corn
Revives, and ſhooteth up, the warm ſweet rain
Makes trees, and herbs (5) ſprout forth, and ſpring amain,
Walk but the fields in ſuch a fragrant morn,
How do the (6) birds your ears with muſick charm!
The (7) flowers, their flaming beauty's do preſent
Unto your captiv'd eyes: and for their ſcent,
The ſweet *Arabian* gums cannot compare;
Which thus perfume, the circumambient air.
So, when the Goſpel ſheds its cheering beams,
On gracious ſouls; like thoſe ſweet warming gleams,
Which God ordaines in nature; to draw forth
The vertue ſeminal that's in the earth:
It warms their (8) hearts, their languid graces cheers;
And on ſuch ſouls, a (9) ſpring-like face appears.
The gracious ſhowers theſe ſpiritual clouds do yield,
Inriches them with (1) ſweetneſs; like a field
Which God hath bleſt. Oh! 'tis exceeding ſweet,
When gracious hearts, and (2) heavenly truths do meet.
How ſhould the hearts of Saints within them ſpring,
When they behold (3) the meſſengers that bring
Theſe gladſom tydings? yea, their very feet
Are beautiful; becauſe their meſſage ſweet.
O what a mercy do thoſe (4) ſouls enjoy
On whom ſuch Goſpel-dews fall day by day!
Thrice happy Land which in this pleaſant ſpring,
Can hear theſe Turtles, in her hedges ſing.
O prize ſuch mercies, if you ask me why?
Read on, you'l ſee, there's Reaſon by and by.

(3) Cant. 2. 11, 12.
(4) Pſal. 104. 30.
(5) Pſal. 65. 11.
(6) Pſal. 104. 12.
(7) Cant. 2. 12.
(8) Col. 4. 8.
(9) Pſal. 52. 8.
(1) Rom. 15. 29.
(2) Rom. 10. 15
(3) Acts 8. 8.
(4) Pſal. 147. 19, 20.

CHAP. X.

Upon a dearth through want of rain.

If God reſtrain the ſhowers, you howl and cry;
Shall ſaints not mourn, when ſpiritual clouds are dry?

OBSERVATION.

'TIs deſervedly accounted a ſad judgment, when God ſhuts up the heavens over our heads, and makes the earth as braſs under our feeet, *Deut.* 28. 23. Then the Husbandmen are called to mourning, *Joel.* 1. 11. All the fields do languiſh, and the bellowing cattle are pined with thirſt. Such a ſad ſtate the Prophet rhetorically deſcribes, *Jer.* 14. 3, 4, 5, 6. *The Nobles have ſent their little ones to the waters, they came to the pits and found no water; they returned with their veſſels empty, they were aſhamed, and confounded, and covered their heads; becauſe the ground is chapt, for there is no rain in the earth, the Plowmen were aſhamed, they covered their heads: yea, the Hinde alſo calved in the field and forſook it, becauſe there was no graſs: and the wild aſſes did ſtand in the high places, they ſnuffed up the wind like dragons, their eyes failed becauſe there was no graſs.*

And that which makes the want of rain ſo terrible a judgment, is the famine of bread, which neceſſarily follows theſe extraordinary droughts and is one of the ſoreſt temporal judgments which God inflicts upon the world

APPLICATION.

AND truly, as much cauſe have they to weep and tremble, over whoſe ſouls God ſhuts up the ſpiritual clouds of the Goſpel, and thereby ſending a ſpiritual famine upon their ſouls. Such a judgment the Lord threatens in *Amos* 8. 11. *Behold the dayes come, ſaith the Lord, that I will ſend a famine in the Land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirſt for water; but*

but of hearing the word of the Lord. The meaning is, I will send a more fearful judgement, than that of the famine of bread; for this particle [not] is not *exclusive*, but *excessive*; implying, that a famine of bread is nothing, or but a light judgment, compared with the famine of the word. Parallel to which is that Text, *Isa.* 5. 6. *I will lay it waste* (saith God of the fruitless Church) *it shall not be pruned nor digged; but there shall come up bryars, and thorns; I will also command the clouds, that they rain not upon it.* And we find both in humane and sacred Histories, that when God hath shut up the spiritual clouds, removing or silencing his Ministers; sensible Christians have ever been deeply affected with it and reckoned it a most tremenduous judgment. Thus the Christians of *Antioch*, when *Chrysostom* their Minister was banished * they judged it better to lose the Sun out of the firmament, than lose that, their Minister. And when *Nazianzen* was taking his leave of *Constantinople*, as he was preaching his farewell-Sermon, the people were exceedingly affected with his loss; and among the rest, an old man in the Congregation fell into a bitter passion, and cryed out, *Aude pater, & tecum trinitatem ipsam ejice.* (*i. e.*) Go farther, if you dare, and take away the whole Trinity with you; meaning, that God would not stay when he was gone. How did the Christians of *Antioch* also weep and lament, when *Paul* was taking his farewell of them? *Act.* 20. 37, 38. He had been a cloud of blessings to that place, but now they must expect no more showers from him. O, they knew not how to give up such a Minister! when the Ark of God (which was the Symbole of the divine presence among the Jews) was taken, *all the City cryed out*, 1 *Sam.* 4. 13. O, the loss of a Gospel-Ministry is an inestimable loss! not to be repaired but by its own return, or by heaven. Mr. *Greenham* tells us, that in the times of Popish persecution, when godly Ministers were haled away from their flocks to Martyrdom, the poor Christians would meet them in the way to the prisons or stake, with their little ones in their armes, and throwing themselves at their feet, would thus bespeak them: "What "shall be our estate, now you are gone to Martyrdom? who

* *Satius est ut sol non luceat, quam ut non doceat* Chrysostomus.

" ſhall inſtruct theſe poor Babes? Who ſhall eaſe our affli-
" cted conſciences? Who ſhall lead us in the way of life?
" recompenſe unto them, O Lord! as they have deſerved,
" who are the cauſes of this, Lord give them ſad hearts. *Quis talia fando, temperet a lachrymis?* And to let you ſee, there is ſufficient ground for this ſorrow, when God reſtrains the influences of the Goſpel, ſolemnly conſider the following particulars.

1. That it is a dreadful token of God's great anger againſt that people from whom he removes the Goſpel. The anger of God was fearfully incenſed againſt the Church of *Epheſus*, when he did but threaten to come againſt her, and remove the Candleſtick out of its place, *Rev.* 2. 5. 'Tis a ſtroke at the ſoul, a blow at the root; uſually the laſt, and therefore the worſt of judgments. There is a pedigree of judgments, firſt *Gomer* bears *Jezreel*, next *Loruhamah*, and at laſt brings forth *Loammi*, *Hoſ.* 1. 4, 6, 8, 9.

2. There is cauſe of mourning, if you conſider the deplorable eſtate in which all the unregenerate ſouls are left, after the Goſpel is removed from them. What will become of theſe? or by whom ſhall they be gathered? It made the bowels of Chriſt yearn within him, when he looked upon the ſcattered multitude that had no Shepherd, *Mat.* 9. 36. What an eaſie conqueſt doth the devil now make of them? how faſt doth hell fill in ſuch times? poor ſouls, being driven thither in droves, and none to reſcue them! *Mathew Paris* tells us, that in the year 1072. when preaching was ſuppreſſed at *Rome*, letters were then framed as coming from hell; wherein the devil gave them thanks for the multitude of ſouls they had ſent to him that year. But truly we need not talk of letters from hell, we are told from heaven, how deplorable the condition of ſuch poor ſouls is. See *Prov.* 28. 19. *Hoſ.* 4. 6. Or,

3. The judgment will yet appear very heavy, if you conſider the loſs which God's own people ſuſtain by the removal of the Goſpel; for therein they loſe (1) their cheif glory, *Rom.* 3. 2. the principal thing in which the peculiar glory of *Iſrael* conſiſted was this, *That unto them was committed the Oracles*

Oracles of God On that account it was called the glorious Land, *Dan.* 11. 16. This made them greater than all the Nations round about them. *Deut.* 4.7, 8. (2) By loſing the Ordinances, they loſe their quickenings, comforts, and ſoul-refreſhments; for all theſe are ſweet ſtreams from the Goſpel fountain, *Pſal.* 119. 50. Col. 4. 8. No wonder then to hear the People of God Complain of dead hearts, when the Goſpel is removed. (3) In the loſs of the Goſpel they loſe their defence and ſafety. This is their hedge, their wall of protection, *Iſa.* 5. 5. Walls and hedges (ſaith *Muſculus in loc.*) are the Ordinances of God, which ſerve both *ad ſeperationem & munitionem*, to diſtinguiſh, and to defend them. When God plucks up this hedge, and breaks down this wall all miſchiefs break in upon us preſently. 2 *Chron.* 15. 3, 4, 5 6. *Now for a long ſeaſon* Iſrael *hath been without the true God, and without a teaching Prieſt, and without Law—And in thoſe times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the Countries and Nation was deſtroyed of Nation, and City of City; for God did vex them with all adverſity.* How long did *Jeruſalem* remain, after that voice was heard in the Temple, *migremus hinc?* Let us be gone. (4) With the Goſpel, we loſe our temporal injoyments and creature comforts: Theſe uſually come and go with the Goſpel. When God had once written *Loammi* upon *Iſrael*, the next news is this, *I will recover my wool and my flax*, *Hoſ.* 2. 9. (5) and laſtly to come up to the very caſe in hand, they loſe with it their ſpiritual food, and ſoul-ſubſiſtence; for the Goſpel is their *feaſt of fat things*; *Iſa*, 25. 6. their ſpiritual wells, *Iſa.* 12. 3. a dole diſtributed among the Lords poor. *Rom.* 1. 11. in a word, it is as the rain and dews of heaven, as hath been ſhewed, which being reſtrained, a ſpirituall famine neceſſarily follows: a famine of all the moſt terrible. Now to ſhew you the analogy betwixt this, and a temporal famine, that therein you may ſee what cauſe you have to be deeply affected with it, take it in theſe ſix following particulars.

A famine is cauſed by the failing of bread, or that which is in the ſtead, and hath the uſe of bread. Dainties and ſuper-

fluous

fluous rarities may fail, and yet men may ſubſiſt comfortably. As long as people have bread and water, they will not famiſh; but take away bread once, and the ſpirit of man faileth: Upon this account bread is called a ſtaff, *Pſal.* 105. 16. becauſe what a ſtaff is to an aged or feeble man, that bread is to the faint and feeble ſpirits, which even ſo do lean upon it. And look what bread is to the natural ſpirits, that, and more than that, the word is to gracious ſpirits, *Job* 23. 12. *I have eſteemed the words of thy mouth, more than my neceſſary food.* If once God break this ſtaff, the inner man, that hidden man of the heart, will quickly begin to fail and faulter.

2. It is not every degree of ſcarcity of bread, that preſently makes a famine, but a general failing of it; when no bread is to be had, or that which is, yields no nutriment. For a famine may as well be occaſioned by Gods taking away, *panis nutrimentum*, the nouriſhing vertue of bread, that it ſhall ſignifie no more as to the end of bread, than a chip, *Hag.* 1. 6. as by taking away *panem nutrientem*, bread it ſelf, *Iſa.* 3. 1. And ſo it is in a ſpiritual famine, which is occaſioned either by Gods removing all the Ordinances, and making viſion utterly to fail; or elſe, though there be preaching prayer and other Ordinances left, (at leaſt, the names and ſhadows of them) yet the preſence of God is not with them. There is no marrow in the bone, no milk in the breaſt; and ſo, as to ſoul-ſubſiſtance, 'tis all one, as if there were no ſuch things.

3. In a corporeal famine, mean and courſe things become ſweet and pleaſant; famine raiſes the price and eſteem of them. That which before you would have thrown to your dogs, now goes down pleaſantly with your ſelves. To the hungry ſoul every bitter thing is ſweet, *Prov.* 27. 7. 'Tis the Dutch Proverb, and a very true one, hunger is the beſt Cook.

Jejunus ſtomachus raro vulgaria temnit. Horat.
In time of famine courſeſt fare contents,
The barking ſtomach ſtrains no complements.

'Tis

'Tis ſtoried of *Artaxerxes Memor*, that when he was flying before his enemies, he fed hungrily upon barly bread, and ſaid, *Cujuſmodi voluptatis hactenus in expertus fuit?* Oh, what pleaſure have I hitherto been ignorant of; when great *Darius* drank the pudled water, that had been defiled with dead carcaſes which had been ſlain in that famous battel, he profeſſed he never drank more pleaſant drink. And famous *Hunniades* ſaid, he never fared more daintily, than when (in a like exigence) he ſupped upon bread, onions, and water, with a poor Shepheard in his cottage.

Juſt ſo, doth the famine of the Word raiſe the price and eſteem, of vulgar and deſpiſed truths. O what would we give for one of thoſe Sermons, one of thoſe Sabbaths we formerly enjoyed? *In thoſe dayes the word of the Lord was precious.* When God calls to the enemy to take away and remove his contemned, but precious dainties, from his wanton Children, and a ſpiritual famine hath a little pinched them, they will then learn to prize their ſpiritual food at a higher rate.

In time of famine ſome perſons ſuffer more than others. It falls heavieſt and pincheth hardeſt upon the poorer ſort, as long as any thing is to be had for money, the rich will have it. So it falls out in a ſpiritual famine; although the moſt experienced, and beſt furniſhed Chriſtians, will have enough to do to live in the abſence of Ordinances, yet they are like to ſubſiſt much better, than weak, ignorant, and unexperienced ones. Some Chriſtians have Husbanded their time well, and like *Joſeph* in the ſeven years *plenty*, laid up for a *ſcarcity*. The Word of God dwells richly in them. Some ſuch there are, as *John* calls young men, who are ſtrong, and the word of God remaineth in them, of whom it may be ſaid, as *Jerom* ſpake of *Nepotianus*, that by long and aſſiduous meditation of the Scriptures, he had made his breaſt the very Library of Chriſt. But others are babes in Chriſt; and though God will preſerve that good work which he hath begun in them, yet theſe poor babes will ſooneſt find, and be moſt concerned in the loſs of their ſpiritual Fathers and Nurſes.

In

5. In time of famine there are pitiful cryes, and heart-breaking complaints where-ever you go. O the many pale faces you shall then see, and the sad language that rings in your ears in every place! One cryes, bread, bread, for Christ's sake, one bit of bread; another faints and falls down at your door. *All her People sigh*, Lam. 1. 11. Yea, the poor little ones are brought in, *v.* 12. crying to their Mothers, where is the Corn and wine? and then pouring out their souls into their Mothers bosome. Just so it is in a famine of the Word; poor Christians every-where sighing and crying, O where are our godly Ministers? Our sweet Sabbaths, Sermons, Sacraments, my Fathers, my Fathers, the Chariots of *Israel* and the horsemen thereof? How beautiful were your feet upon the mountains! And then weeping, like the people at *Pauls* departure, to think they shall see their faces no more.

6. Lastly, in time of famine, there is nothing so costly or precious, but people will part with it to purchase bread. *They have given their pleasant things, for meat to relieve their souls, Lam.* 1. 11. And doubtless when a spiritual famine shall pinch hard, those that have been close-handed to maintain a Gospel Ministry, will account it a choice mercy to enjoy them again at any rate. *Though the Lord feed you with the bread of affliction, and give you the waires, of adversity, yet it will sweeten that bread and water to you, if your teachers be no more removed into corners*, Isa. 30. 20.

REFLECTIONS.

The ungrateful souls reflection. 1. Is the famine of the word such a fearful judgment? then Lord pardon my unthankfulness, for the plentiful and long continued injoyment of such a precious and invaluable mercy. How lightly have I esteemed the great things of the Gospel? O that with eyes and hands lifted up to heaven, I might bless the Lord, that ever I was brought forth in an age of so much light! in a valley of visions, in a Land flowing with Gospel-mercies. *Hath not God made of one bloud, all the Nations of men, to dwell on the face of the earth? and determined*

mined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation? Act. 17. 26. Many of these great and populous Nations are involved in gross darkness. Now that of all the several ages of the world, and places in it; God should espy the best place for me, and bring me forth into it, in such an happy nick of time, as can hardly be paralleld in History, for the plenty of Gospel-mercies, that this age and Nation hath enjoyed; that my Mother did not bring me forth in the desarts of *Arabia*, or wastes of *America*, but in *England* where God hath made the Sun of the Gospel to stand still, as the natural Sun once did over *Gibeon*; and that such a mercy should no more affect my soul, let shame cover my face for this, and trembling seize my heart.

2. The deprived Christians Reflection.

Is the Gospel indeed departed? its sweet influences restrained? and a famine worse than that of bread come upon us. *Alas! for the day, for it is a great day, so that none is like it; it is even the day of* Jacob's *trouble.* Wo is me, that ever I should survive the Gospel, and the precious liberties and mercies of it! What horrid sins have been harboured amongst us, for which the Lord contends, by such an unparalleld judgment? Lord, let me justifie thee even in this severe dispensation; the provocation of thy Sons, and of thy daughters have been very great, and amongst them none greater than mine. May we not this day read our sin in our punishment? O what nice and wanton appetites, what curious and itching ears, had thy people in the dayes of plenty? Methods, tones and gestures, were more regarded than the excellent treasures of divine truths. Ah my soul! I remember my fault this day? little did I then consider, that Sermons work not upon hearts, as they are thus elegant, thus admirable, but as they are instruments in the hand of God appointed to such an end. Even as *Austin* said of the Conduits of water, though one be in the shape of an Angel, another of a beast, yet the water refreshes as it is water, and not as it comes from such a Conduit: By this also, O Lord, thou rebukest the supineſs and formality of thy people. How drowsie, dull, and careless have they been under the most excellent and quickning means? few more then I. Alas! I have often presented my

body before the Lord in Ordinances, ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ ἐξῶ; but my ſoul hath been wandring abroad, as *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaks. I ſhould have come from under every Sermon as a ſheet comes from the preſs, with all the ſtamps and lively impreſſions of the truths I heard upon my heart. But Alas! If it had been demanded of me, as once it was of *Ariſtotle*, after a long and curious Oration, how he liked it, I might have anſwered as he did, Truly I did not hear it, for I was all the while minding another matter. Righteous art thou, O Lord, in all that is come upon us.

3. The ſilent Miniſters Reflection.

I am now as a Spring ſhut up, that can yield no refreſhment to thirſty ſouls, ready to periſh. Thou haſt ſaid to me as once to *Ezekiel*, *Son of man, behold, I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and thou ſhalt be dumb.* This is a heavy judgment, but thou muſt be juſtified and cleared in it. Although men may not, yet God, if he pleaſe, may put a lighted candle under a buſhel. And herein I muſt acknowledge thy righteouſneſs. Many times have I been ſinfully ſilent, when both thy glory and the intereſt of ſouls ingaged me to ſpeak. Moſt juſtly therefore haſt thou made my tongue to cleave to its roof. Little did I conſider the precioufneſs of ſouls, or the tremenduous account to be given for them, at the appearing of the great Shepherd. I have now time enough to ſit down and mourn over former miſcarriages, and loſt opportunities. Lord reſtore me once again to a ſerviceable capacity, to a larger ſphere of activity for thee, for I am now become as a broken veſſel. It grieves me to the heart, to ſee thy flock ſcattered, to hear thy people cry to me, as once to *Joſeph*, *Give us bread, for why ſhould we dye in thy preſence?* Thy word is like fire, ſhut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing. O, that thou wouldſt once again open the doors of thine houſe, that there may be bread enough in thine houſe for all thy children.

The

The *Poem.*

WHen God doth make the (1) heavens above us braſs,
The earth's like iron. Flowers, herbs and graſs
Have loſt their fragrant green; are turned (2) yellow,
The brooks are dry, the pining cattel (3) bellow.
The fat and flowry meadows ſcorcht and burn'd,
The Countreys mirth is into (4) mourning turn'd.
The clefted earth, her thirſty mouth (5) ſets ope,
Unto the empty clouds; as 'twere in hope
Of ſome refreſhing drops, that might allay
Her fiery thirſt: but they ſoon paſs away.
The penſive (6) Husbandman with his own eyes,
Bedews his Land; becauſe he ſees the skies:
Refuſe to do it, (7) juſt ſo ſtands the caſe,
When God from ſouls, removes the means of grace.
God's Miniſters are clouds, their doctrine (8) rain;
Which when the Lord in judgment ſhall reſtrain:
The peoples ſouls in ſhort time will be found
In ſuch a caſe, as this dry parched ground.
When this (9) ſad judgment falls on any Nation,
Let Saints therein take up this lamentation.

O dreadful, dark, and diſmal day!
How is our glory fled away.
Our Sun gone down, our ſtars o'recaſt;
God's heritage is now laid waſt.
Our pining ſouls no bread can get,
With wantons God hath juſtly met,
When we are fed unto the full,
This man was tedious; that was dull.
But they are gone, and there remain
No ſuch occaſions to complain.
Stars are not now for lights, but ſigns;
God knows of what heart-breaking times.
Sure heaven intends not peace, but wars;
In calling home Ambaſſadors.

(1) Deut. 28. 23
(2) Joel 1. 19.
(3) Joel 1. 20. Jer. 14. 5 6.
(4) Joel 1. 11.
(5) Jer. 14. 4.
(6) Amos 5. 16.
(7) Amos 8. 11.
(8) Deut. 32. 2. Heb. 6. 7, 8.
(9) Hoſ. 9. 12.

How long did *Sodom*'s judgment ſtay?
When righteous *Lot* was ſnatcht away.
How long remain'd that ſtately Hall,
When *Sampſon* made the pillars fall?
When Horſemen, and Commanders fly;
Wo to the helpleſs Infantry.
This is a ſad and fatal blow,
A publick loſs and overthrow.
You that ſo long have wiſh'd them gone,
Be quiet now; the thing is done.
Did they torment you ere your day?
God hath remov'd them out o'th'way.
Now ſleep in ſin, and take your eaſe;
Their doctrine ſhall no more diſpleaſe.
But Lord! what ſhall become of us?
Our Teacher's gone, and left us thus!
To whom ſhall we our ſelves addreſs,
When conſcience labours in diſtreſs?
O, who ſhall help us at our need?
Or pour in Balm, when wounds do bleed?
Help Lord, for unto thee our eyes
Do pour out tears; our groans, our cryes
Shall never ceaſe: till thou reſtore,
The mercies which we had before.
Till *Sions* paths where graſs now grows,
Be trodden by the feet of thoſe
That love thy name: and long t'enjoy
The mercies they have ſin'd away.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Seeds dye and rot, and then moſt freſh appear,
Saints bodies riſe more orient then they were.

Upon the corrupting of the Seed before it ſpring.

OBSERVATION.

AFter the ſeed is committed to the earth, it ſeems to periſh and dye, as our Saviour ſpeaks, *John.* 12.24. *Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit.* The death of the Corn in the earth is not a total death, but only the corruption or alteration of it: for if once the ſeminal life and vertue of it were quite extinguiſht, it could never put forth blade or ear without a miracle. Yet, becauſe that alteration is a kind of death, therefore Chriſt here uſes it as a fit illuſtration of the reſurrection. And indeed there is nothing in nature more apt to illuſtrate that great myſtery. What a fragrant, green and beautiful blade do we ſee ſpring up from a corrupted ſeed? how black, and mouldy is that? how beautiful and verdant is this?

APPLICATION.

EVen thus ſhall the bodies of the Saints ariſe in beauty and glory at the reſurrection. *They are ſown in diſhonour, they are raiſed in glory; they are ſown natural bodies, they are raiſed ſpiritual bodies,* 1 *Cor.* 15.43, 44. The Husbandman knows, that though the ſeed rot in the earth, yet it will riſe again. And the believer knows, *That though after his skin worms deſtroy his body, yet in his fleſh he ſhall ſee God,* Job 19. 25, *&c.* and the reſemblance betwixt the ſeed ſown, and ſpringing up; and the bodies of the Saints dying, and riſing again, lyes in theſe following particulars.

First,

1. First, the seed is committed to the earth from whence it came, so is the body of a Saint; earth it was, and to earth it is again resolved. Grace exempts not the body of the best man from seeing corruption, *Rom.* 8. 10. Though Christ be in him, yet the body is dead; that is, sentenced to death, because of sin, *Heb. 6. ult*, *It is appointed for all men once to dye.*

2. Secondly, The seed is cast into the earth in hope, 1 *Cor.* 9. 10. Were there not a resurrection of it expected, the Husbandman would never be willing to cast away his Corn. The bodies of Saints are also committed to the grave in hope, 1 *Thes.* 4. 13, 14. *But I would not have you to be ignorant brethren, concerning those which are asleep, as them which have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus dyed and rose again, even so also them which sleep in Jesus shall the Lord bring with him.* This blessed hope of a resurrection, sweetens, not only the troubles of life, but the pangs of death.

3. Thirdly, the seed is cast into the earth seasonably, in its proper season. So are the bodies of the Saints, *Job.* 5. 26. *Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, as a shock of corn cometh in, in its season.* They alwayes dye in the fittest time, though sometimes they seem to dye immaturately. The time of their death was from all eternity prefixt by God, beyond which they cannot go, and short of which they cannot come.

4. The seed lyes many dayes and nights under the clods, before it rise and appear again. *Even so man lyeth down, and riseth not again till the heavens be no more*, Job 14. 12. The dayes of darkness in the grave are many.

5. When the time is come for its shooting up, the earth that covered it can hide it no longer, it cannot keep it down a day more; it will find or make a way through the clods. So in that day when the great trump shall sound, bone shall come to his bone, and the graves shall not be able to hold them a minute longer. Both Sea and earth must render the dead that are in them, *Rev.* 20. 13.

6. When the seed appears above ground again, it appears much more fresh and orient than when it was cast into the earth. God cloaths it with such beauty, that it is not like to

to what it was before. Thus riſe the bodies of Saints, marvellouſly improved, beautified and perfected with ſpiritual qualities and rich endowments; in reſpect whereof they are called ſpiritual bodies, 1 *Cor.* 15. 43. not properly, but analogically ſpiritual; for look as ſpirits ſubſiſt without food, raiment, ſleep, know no laſſitude, wearineſs or pain; ſo our bodies after the reſurrection ſhall be above theſe neceſſities and diſtempers; for we ſhall be as the Angels of God, *Mat.* 22. 30. Yea, our vile bodies ſhall be changed, and made like unto Chriſts glorious body; which is the higheſt pitch, and aſcent of glory and honour, that an humane body is capable of, *Phil.* 3. 21. Indeed the glory of the ſoul ſhall be the greateſt glory; that's the orient invaluable jem; but God will beſtow a diſtinct glory upon the body, and richly enammel the very caſe in which that precious jewel ſhall be kept. In that glorious morning of the reſurrection, the Saints ſhall put on their new freſh ſuits of fleſh, richly laid and trimmed with glory. Thoſe bodies which in the grave were but duſt and rottenneſs, when it delivers them back again, ſhall be ſhining and excellent pieces, abſolutely and everlaſtingly freed. (1) From all natural infirmities and diſtempers; death is their good Phyſician, which at once freed them of all diſeaſes. 'Tis a great Affliction now to many of the Lord's people, to be clog'd with ſo many bodily infirmities which render them very unſerviceable to God. *The ſpirit indeed is willing, but the fleſh is weak*, A crazy body retorts and ſhoots back its diſtempers upon the ſoul with which it is ſo cloſely conjoyned; but though now the ſoul (as *Theophraſtus* ſpeaks) payes a dear rent for the Tabernacle in which it dwells, yet when death diſſolves that Tabernacle, all the diſeaſes and pains under which it groaned ſhall be buried in the rubbiſh of its mortality; and when they come to be re-united again, God will beſtow rich gifts and dowries, even upon the body, in the day of its re-eſpouſals to the ſoul. (2) It ſhall be freed from all deformities, there are no breaches, flaws, monſtroſities in glorified bodies; but of them it may much rather be ſaid, what was once ſaid of *Abſalom*, 2 *Sam.* 14. 25. *That from the crown of his head, to the*

the sole of his foot; there was no blemish in him. (3ly.) It shall be freed from all natural necessities, to which it is now subjected in this its animal state. How is the soul now disquieted and tortured with cares and troubles, to provide for a perishing body? Many unbelieving and unbecoming fears, it is now vexed with. What shall it eat? and what shall it drink? and wherewithal shall it be cloathed? *But meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; God shall destroy both it and them,* 1 *Cor.* 6. 13. (*i. e.*) as to their present use and office; for as to its existence, so the belly shall not be destroyed. But even as the Masts, Poop and Stern of a Ship abide in the harbour after the voyage is ended, so shall these bodily members, as *Tertullian* excellently illustrates it. (4ly.) They shall be freed from death, to which thenceforth they can be subject no more; that formidable adversary of nature shall assault it no more. *For they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage, neither can they dye any more; for they shall be equal to the Angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection,* Luk. 20. 35, 36 Mark it [equal to the Angels] not that they shall be separate, and single spirits without bodies, as the Angels are, but equal to them in the way and manner of their living and acting. We shall then live upon God, and act freely, purely, and delightfully for God; for all kind of living upon, and delighting in creatures, seems in that Text (by a Synechdoche of the part which is ordinarily in Scripture put for all creature-delights, dependencies, and necessities) to be excluded. Nothing but God shall enamour and fill the soul, and the body shall be perfectly subdued to the spirit. Lord, what hast thou prepared for them that love thee?

Ἰσαγγέλῳς Βίῳντες.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The healthful Saints Reflection.

If I shall receive my body again, so dignified and improved in the world to come, then Lord let me never be unwilling to use my body now for the interest of thy glory, or my own Salvation. Now, O my God, it grieves me to think how

how many precious opportunities of serving and honouring thee, I have lost under pretence of endangering my health.

I have been more solicitous to live long and healthfully, than to live usefully and fruitfully; and like enough my life had been more serviceable to thee, if it had not been so fondly overvalued by me.

Foolish soul, hath God given thee a body for a living tool or instrument, and art thou afraid to use it? wherein is the mercy of having a body, if not in spending and wearing it out in the service of God? to have an active vigorous body, and not to imploy and exercise it for God, for fear of endangering its health, is as if one should give thee a handsom and sprightful horse, upon condition thou shouldst not ride or work him. O! if some of the Saints had enjoyed the blessing of such an healthy active body as mine, what excellent services would they have performed to God in it?

1. The sickly Saints reflection.

If my body shall as surely rise again in glory, vigour and excellent endowments as the seed which I sow doth, why should not this comfort me over all the pains, weaknesses and dulness with which my soul is now clogged? Thou knowest my God, what a grief it hath been to my soul, to be fettered and intangled with the distempers and manifold indispositions of this vile body. It hath made me sigh and say, with holy *Anselme*, when he saw the mounting bird weighed down by the stone hanging at her leg, Lord, thus it fares with the soul of thy servant! fain would I serve, glorifie, and enjoy thee, but a distempered body will not let me. However, it is reviving to think, that though I am now forced to crawl like a worm in the discharge of my duties, I shall shortly fly like a Seraphim in the execution of thy will. Cheer up drooping soul, the time is at hand, when thou shalt be made more willing than thou art, and thy flesh not so weak as now it is.

2. The dying Saints Reflection.

And is it so indeed? then let the dying Saint like *Jacob* rouze up himself upon his bed, and incourage himself against the fears of death by this refreshing consideration. Let him say with holy dying *Musculus*, Why trembleſt thou (O my soul) to go forth of this Tabernacle to the Land of

reſt? hath thy body been ſuch a pleaſant habitation to thee, that thou ſhouldſt be ſo loath to part with it, though but for a time? and with aſſurance of receiving it again with ſuch a glorious improvement? I know (O my ſoul) that thou haſt a natural inclination to this body, reſulting from the dear and ſtrict union which God himſelf hath made betwixt thee and it! yea, even the holieſt of men do ſometimes ſenſibly feel the like in themſelves; but beware thou love it not immoderately or inordinately; 'tis but a creature, how dear ſoever it be to thee: yea, a fading creature, and that which now ſtands in thy way to the full enjoyment of God. But ſay my ſoul, why are the thoughts of parting with it ſo burdenſom to thee? Why ſo loath to take death by its cold hand? Is this body thy old and dear friend? True, but yet thou parteſt not with it upon ſuch ſad terms, as ſhould deſerve a tear at parting. For mayeſt thou not ſay of this departure, as *Paul* of the departure of *Oneſimus*, Philem. *v.* 15. *It therefore departeth for a ſeaſon that thou mayeſt receive it for ever.* The daye of re-eſpouſals will quickly come, and in the mean time as thy body ſhall not be ſenſible of the tedious length of interpoſing time, ſo neither ſhalt thou be ſolicitous about thine abſent friend: for the fruition of God in that thine unbodied ſtate, ſhall fill thee with infinite ſatisfaction and reſt.

Or is it not ſo much ſimply for parting with it, as for the manner of thy parting, either by the ſlow and lingring approaches of a natural, or the quick and terrible approaches of a violent death: Why, trouble not thy ſelf about that; for if God lead thee through the long dark lane of a tedious ſickneſs, yet at the end of it is thy fathers houſe. And for a violent death 'tis not ſo material, whether friends or enemies ſtand weeping or triumphing over thy dead body. *Nihil corpus ſentit in nervo cum anima ſit in cælo.* When thy ſoul ſhall be in heaven, 'twill not be ſenſible how the body is uſed on earth.

4. The ungodly ſouls reflection

But oh! what an uncomfortable parting will mine be? and how much more ſad our meeting again! how will this ſoul and body bluſh, yea tremble when they meet, who have been

been copartners in ſo much guilt? I damn'd my ſoul, to pleaſe my fleſh, and now have ruin'd both thereby: had I denied my fleſh to ſerve Chriſt, worn out my body in the ſervice of my ſoul; I had thereby happily provided for them both, but I began at the wrong end, and ſo have ruin'd both eternally.

The *Poem.*

BAre ſeeds have no great beauty, but inhum'd
That which they had is loſt; and quite conſum'd
They ſoon (*a*) corrupt, and grow more baſe by odds
When dead; and buried underneath the clods.
It falls in (*b*) baſeneſs, but at length doth riſe
In glory; which delights beholders eyes.
How great a difference have a few dayes made
Betwixt it, in the buſhel, and the blade!
This lovely, lively emblem aptly may
Type out the glorious Reſurrection day.
Wherein the Saints that in the duſt do lye,
Shall riſe in glory, vigour, dignity.
With ſinging in that (*c*) morning they ariſe,
And (*d*) dazling glory, ſuch as mortal eyes
Ne're viewed on earth. The ſparkling buties here,
No more can equalize their ſplendor there:
Than glimmering glow-worms do the faireſt ſtar,
That ſhines in heaven; or the ſtones that are
In every ſtreet, may competition hold
With glittering diamonds in rings of gold.
For unto (*e*) Chriſt's moſt glorious body they
Shall be conform'd in glory, at that day;
Whoſe luſtre would, ſhould it on mortals fall;
Tranſport a *Stephen*, and confound a *Paul*.
'Tis now a courſe, and crazy houſe of clay:
But O! how dear do ſouls for lodging pay!

(*a*) Joh. 12. 24.

(*b*) 1 Cor. 15. 43.

(*c*) Pſa. 49. 14.

(*d*) Mat. 13. 43.

(*e*) Phil. 3. 21.

Few more than I, for thou my soul hast bin
Within these tents of *Kedar* cooped in.
Where with distempers clog'd, thou mak'st thy moans,
And for deliverance with tears and groans;
(f) Rev. 7. 17. Hast often sued, cheer up, the (f) time will be
When thou from all these troubles shalt be free.
No jarring humours, cloudy vapours, rheums,
Pains, aches, or what ever else consumes
My dayes in grief; whil'st in the Christian race,
(g) Mat. 26. 41. Flesh lags behind; (g) and can't keep equal pace
With the more willing spirit: none of these,
Shall thenceforth clog thee, or disturb thine ease.

CHAP. XII.

Upon the resemblance of wheat and tares.

As wheat resembled is by viler tares,
So vile hypocrisie like grace appears.

OBSERVATION.

IT is *Jeroms* Observation, that wheat and tares are so much alike in their first springing up, that it is exceeding difficult to distinguish the one from the other. These are his words, *Inter triticum & lolium quamdiu herba est, & nondum culmus venit ad spicam; grandis similitudo est: & indiscernendo aut nulla, aut perdifficilis distantia.* The difference (saith he) between them is either none at all, or wonderful difficult to discern, which those words of Christ, *Mat.* 13.30. plainly confirm. Let them both alone till the Harvest; thereby intimating, both the difficulty of distinguishing the tares and wheat; as also, the unwarrantable rashness of bold and hasty censures of mens sincerity or hypocrisie, which is there shadowed by them.

A P-

APPLICATION.

HOw difficult ſoever it be to diſcern the difference betwixt wheat and tares; yet doubtleſs the eye of ſence can much eaſier diſcriminate them, than the moſt quick and piercing eye of man can diſcern the difference betwixt ſpecial and common grace: for all ſaving graces in the Saints have their counterfeits in hypocrites. There are *ſimilar works in theſe*, which a ſpiritual and very judicious eye may eaſily miſtake for the *ſaving and genuine effects* of the ſanctifying Spirit.

Doth the Spirit of God convince the conſciences of his people, of the evil of ſin? *Rom.* 7. 9. Hypocrites have their convictions too, *Exod.* 10. 16. *Then* Pharoah *called for* Moſes *and* Aaron *in haſt, and he ſaid, I have ſinned againſt the Lord your God, and againſt you.* Thus was *Saul* alſo convicted, 1 *Sam.* 15. 24.

Doth true conviction and compunction work reformation of life, in the people of God? even hypocrites alſo have been famous for their reformations. The unclean ſpirit often goes out of the formal hypocrite, by an external reformation; and yet ſtill retains his propriety in them, *Mat.* 12. 43, 44. For that departure is indeed no more than a politick retreat. Many that ſhall never eſcape the damnation of hell, have yet eſcaped the pollutions of the world, and that by the knowledge of the Son of God, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20.

Doth the Spirit of the Lord produce that glorious and ſupernatural work of faith, in convinced and humbled ſouls? in this alſo the hypocrite apes and imitates the believer, *Acts* 8. 13. *Then* Simon *himſelf believed alſo*, Luke 8. 13. *Theſe are they which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.*

Doth the precious eye of faith, diſcovering the tranſcendent excellencies that are in Chriſt, inflame the affections of the believing ſoul with vehement deſires and longings after him? Strange motions of heart have alſo been found in hypocrites

pocrites towards Christ and heavenly things, *John* 6. 34. *Lord evermore give us this bread*, Mat. 25. 8. *Give us of your oyl, for our lamps are gone out.* With what a rapture was *Balaam* transported, when he said, *Let me dye the death of the righteous, and my last end be like his?* Numb. 23. 10.

Doth the work of faith in some believers bear upon its top branches, the full ripe fruits of a blessed assurance? Lo! What strong confidences, and high-built perswasions of an interest in God, have sometimes been found, even in unsanctified ones? *Joh.* 8. 54. *Of whom you say, that he is your God, and yet ye have not known him.* To the same height of confidence arrived those vain souls, mentioned in *Rom.* 2. 19. Yea, so strong may this false assurance be, that they dare boldly venture to go to the judgment seat of God, and there defend it, *Mat.* 7. 22. *Lord, Lord, have we not prophecyed in thy name?*

Doth the Spirit of God fill the heart of the assured believer with joy unspeakable and full of glory, giving them through faith a prelibation or foretaste of heaven it self, in those first fruits of it? How near to this comes that which the Apostle supposes may be found even in Apostates! *Heb.* 6. 8, 9. who are there said, *to taste the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.* What shall I say if real Christians delight in Ordinances, those that are none may also delight in approaching to God, *Ezek.* 33. 32. It may be you will say, though the difference be not eatily discernable in their active obedience; yet, when it shall come to suffering, there every eye may discern it: the false heart will then flinch, and cannot brook that work. And yet, even this is no infallible rule neither; for the Apostle supposes, that the *Salamander* of hypocrisie may live in the very flames of Martyrdom, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. *If I give my body to be burnt, and have not charity.* And it was long since determined in this case, *Non pœna, sed causa facit Martyrem*; so that without controversie, the difficulty of distinguishing them is very great.

And this difference will yet be more subtile and undiscernable, if I should tell you, that as in so many things, the hypo-

hypocrite resembles the Saint: so there are other things in which a real Christian may act too like an hypocrite. When we find a *Pharoah* confessing, an *Herod* practising, as well as hearing, a *Judas* preaching Christ, an *Alexander* ventring his life for *Paul*; and on the other side, shall find a *David* condemning that in another, which he practised himself; an *Hezekiah* glorying in his riches, a *Peter* dissembling, and even all the Disciples forsaking *Christ* in an hour of trouble and danger. O then! how hard is it for the eye of man to discern betwixt chaff and wheat? how many upright hearts are now censured, whom God will clear? how many false hearts are now approved, whom God will condemn? men ordinarily have no clear convictive proofs, but only probable symptoms, which at most can beget but a conjectural knowledge of anothers state. And they that shall peremptorily judge either way, may possibly wrong the generation of the upright; or on the other side, absolve and justifie the wicked. And truly, considering what hath been said it is no great wonder that dangerous mistakes are so frequently made in this matter. But though man cannot, the Lord both can, and will perfectly discriminate them. *The Lord knoweth who are his*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. He will have a day perfectly to sever the tares from the wheat, to melt off the varnish of the most resplendent and refined hypocrite, and to blow off the ashes of infirmities, which have covered and obscured the very sparks of sincerity in his people. He will make such a division as was never yet made in the world, how many divisions soever there have been in it. *And then shall men indeed return, and discern betwixt the righteous and the wicked, betwixt him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.* Mean while (my soul) thou canst not better imploy thy self, whether thou be sound or unsound, than in making these reflections upon thy self.

REFLECTIONS.

The censorious souls reflection

AND is this so? then Lord, pardon the rashness and precipitancy of my censorious spirit; for I have often boldly.

boldly anticipated thy judgment, and aſſumed thy prerogative, although thou haſt ſaid, *Why doſt thou judge thy brother? and why doſt thou ſet at nought thy brother? we ſhall all ſtand before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt; for it is written, as I live (ſaith the Lord) every knee ſhall bow to me, and every tongue ſhall confeſs to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more,* Rom. 14. 10, 11, 12, 13. And again. *He that judgeth me is the Lord. Let us therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and make manifeſt the counſels of the heart; and then ſhall every man have praiſe of God,* 1 Cor. 4. 4, 5.

What if God will own ſome of them for his Sons, to whom I refuſe to give the reſpect of brethren? I may paſs haſty and headlong cenſures upon others, but where is my commiſſion for ſo doing? I want not only a commiſſion, but fit qualifications for ſuch a work as this. Can I pierce into the heart as God? can I infallibly diſcover the hidden motives, ends, and principles of actions? Beſides, O my ſoul! thou art conſcious of ſo much falſneſs in thy ſelf, that were there no other conſideration, that alone might reſt in a thee from all uncharitable and haſty cenſures. If others knew but what I know of my ſelf, would they not judge as ſeverely of me, as I do of others?

2. The preſumptuous ſouls Reflection.

Though I may not judge the final ſtate of another, yet I may and ought to judge the ſtate of my own ſoul; which is doubtleſs a more neceſſary and concerning work to me. For ſince every ſaving grace in a Chriſtian hath its counterfeit in the hypocrite, how needful is it, for thee, (O my ſoul) to make a ſtand here, and ſolemnly to ponder this great queſtion! whether thoſe things whereon I depend as my beſt evidences for the life to come, be the real, or only the common works of the Spirit? whether they be ſuch as can now endure the teſt of the Word, and abide a fair tryal at the bar of my own conſcience?

Come then, my ſoul! ſet the Lord before thee, to whom the ſecrets of all hearts are manifeſt; and in the awful ſence of that great day, make true anſwer to theſe heart-diſcovering queries; for though thou canſt not diſcern the difference

difference betwixt these things in another, yet thou mayest and oughtest to discern it in thy self; for what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him?

First, Is my obedience uniform? am I the same man in all times, places and companies? or rather, am I not exact and curious in open and publick; remiss and careless, in private and secret duties? sincere souls are uniform souls, *Psal.* 119. 6. the hypocrite is no closet-man, *Mat.* 6. 5. 1.

Secondly, Doth that which I call grace in me, oppose and mortifie, or doth it not rather quietly consist with, and protect my lusts and corruptions? true grace tollerates no lust, *Gal.* 5. 17. No, not the bosom darling-corruption, *Psa.* 18. 23. 2.

Thirdly, Doth that which I call my grace, humble, empty and abase my soul? or rather, doth it not puff it up with self-conceitedness? all saving grace is humble grace, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. *But the soul which is lifted up, is not upright*, Hab. 2. 4. 3.

Lastly, Canst thou (my soul) rejoyce and bless God for the grace imparted to others? and rejoyce, if any design for *Christ* be carried on in world by other hands? or rather, dost thou not envy those that excel thee, and carest for no work in which thou art not seen? 4.

But stay my soul, it is enough: If these be the substantial differences betwixt special and common grace, I more than doubt, I shall not endure the day of his coming, *Whose fan is in his hand.* Do not those spots appear upon me, which are not the spots of his children? Wo is me, poor wretch, the characters of death are upon my soul! Lord, add power to the form, life to the name to live, practise to the knowledge, or I perish eternally! O rather give me the *Saints heart*, than the *Angels tongue*; the poorest breathing of thy Spirit, than the richest ornaments of common gifts! let me neither deceive my self or others, in matters of so deep and everlasting consequence!

The *Poem*.

IN Eaſtern Countreys, as good Authors write,
Tares in their ſpringing up appear to ſight;
Not like it ſelf, a weed; but real wheat;
Whoſe ſhape, and form it counterfeits ſo neat;
Though 'twould require a moſt judicious eye,
The one from t'other to diverſifie.
Till both to ſome maturity be grown,
And then the difference is eas'ly known.
(1) Mat. 13.30. Even thus (1) hypocriſie that curſed weed,
Springs up ſo like true grace, that he will need
More than a common inſight in this caſe,
That ſaith this is not, that is real grace.
Ne're did the cunning Actor, though a ſlave
Array'd in princely robes; himſelf behave
So like a King; as this doth act the part
Of ſaving grace, by its deep helliſh art.
(2) Luk. 7.38. Do gracious ſouls (2) melt, mourn and weep for ſin?
(3) Sam. 15.24 The like in (3) hypocrites obſerv'd hath been.
(4) 1 Pet 1.8. Have they their (4) comforts, joyes, and raptures ſweet?
(5) Joh. 5.33. With them in comforts (5) hypocrites do meet.
In all religious duties, they can go
As far as Saints; in ſome things farther too.
(6) Num 24.4. They ſpeak like Angels, (6) and you'l think within
The very ſpirit of Chriſt; and grace hath bin.
They come ſo neer, that ſome like *Iſaac* take
Jacob for *Eſau*; this, for that miſtake.
And boldly call (their eyes with his being dim)
True grace hypocriſie, and duty ſin.
Yea, many alſo *Jacob* like imbrace
Leah for *Rachel*, common gifts for grace.
And in their boſoms hug it, till the light
Diſcover their miſtake; and cleer their ſight.
And then like him, confounded they will cry,
Alas! 'tis *Leah*, curs'd hypocriſie.

Guide

Guide me my God, that I may not in ſtead
Of ſaving grace, nurſe up this curſed weed.
O let my heart by thee at laſt be found
Sincere, and all thy workings on it ſound.

CHAP. XIII.

Fowls, weeds, and blaſtings do your corn annoy,
Even ſo corruptions would your grace deſtroy.

Upon the dangers incident to corn, from ſeed-time to Harveſt.

OBSERVATION.

THere are (amongſt many others) three critical and dangerous periods, betwixt the ſeed-time and Harveſt. The firſt, when corn is newly committed to the earth, all that lyes uncovered is quickly pickt up by the birds; and much of that which is but ſlightly covered, is ſtockt up as ſoon as it begins to ſprout, by Rooks and other devouring fowls, *Mat.* 13. 4. but if it eſcape the fowls, and gets root in the earth, yet then is it hazarded by noxious weeds, which purloin and ſuck away its nouriſhment, whilſt it is yet in the tender blade. If by the care of the vigilant Husbandman it be freed from choaking weeds; yet laſtly, as great a danger as any of the former ſtill attends it; for oftentimes, whilſt it is blowing in the ear, blaſtings, and mildews, ſmite it in the ſtalk, which cuts off the juice and ſap that ſhould aſcend to nouriſh the ear; and ſo ſhrivels and dries up the grain whilſt it is yet immature, whereby it becomes like thoſe ears of corn in *Pharaohs* viſion, which were thin, and blaſted with the Eaſt-wind;; or like the ears the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks of upon the houſe top, wherewith the reaper filleth not his arms.

APPLICATION.

TRue grace from the infancy to the perfection thereof, conflicts with far more greater dangers, amongſt which it anſwerably meets with three dangerous periods which marvellouſly hazard it: So that it is a much greater wonder that it ever arrives at its juſt perfection. For (1) no ſooner hath the great Husbandman diſſeminated theſe holy ſeeds in the regenerate heart, but multitudes of impetuous corruptions immediately aſſault, and would cetainly devour them like the fowls of the air, did not the ſame arm that ſowed them, alſo protect them. It fares with grace, as with *Chriſt* its Author, whom *Herod* ſought to deſtroy in his very infancy. The new creature is ſcarce warm in its ſeat, before it muſt fight to defend its ſelf. This conflict is excellently ſet forth in that famous Text, *Gal.* 5. 17. *The fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe are contrary the one to the other; ſo that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*

By *fleſh* here, underſtand the corruption of nature by original ſin, and the ſinful motions thereof; by *ſpirit*, not the ſoul, or natural ſpirit of man, but the Spirit of God in man, *viz.* thoſe graces in men which are the workmanſhip of the Spirit, and therefore called by his name. The oppoſition betwixt theſe two is expreſſed by luſting (*i.e.*) deſiring the mutual ruine and deſtruction of each other; for even when they are not acting, yet then they are luſting, there is an oppoſite diſpoſition againſt each other; which oppoſition is both a *formal* and an *effective* oppoſition. There are two contrary forms to men in every Saint, *Col.* 3. 9, 10. From hence an effective oppoſition muſt needs follow, for as things are in their natures and principles, ſo they are in their operations and effects; workings alwayes follow beings; fire and water are of contrary qualities, and when they meet, they effectively oppoſe each other. Sin and grace are ſo oppoſite, that if ſin ſhould ceaſe to oppoſe grace, it would ceaſe to be ſin; and if grace ſhould not oppoſe ſin,

it

it would ceaſe to be grace. And this doth much more endanger the work of grace, than any other enemy it hath; becauſe it works againſt it more *inwardly*, *conſtantly*, and *advantagiouſly*, than any thing elſe can do. (1) More inwardly; for it hath its being and working in the ſame ſoul where grace dwells, yea, in the ſelf ſame fame faculties, ſo that it not only ſets one faculty againſt another, but the ſame faculty againſt it ſelf, the underſtanding againſt the underſtanding, and the will againſt the will, ſo that ye cannot do the good, nor yet the evil that ye would; not the good that ye would, becauſe when the ſpirit moves to good, and beats upon the heart by divine pulſations, exciting it to duty, the fleſh croſſes and oppoſes it there; and if it cannot totally hinder the performance of a duty, yet it lames the ſoul upon the working hand, whereby the performance is not ſo ſpiritual, free and compoſed, as it deſires; nor yet the evil that you would commit, if grace were not there, becauſe when luſt ſtirs in its firſt motions, grace puts a rub in its way. *How can I do this great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?* Gen. 39. 9. And if it cannot (which for the moſt part it doth) hinder the acting of ſin, yet it ſo engages the will againſt it, that it is not committed with complacency and full conſent, *Rom.* 7. 15. *What I do, I allow not.* (2) It oppoſes it more *conſtantly*, it's like a continual drooping: a man can no more flie from this enemy, than from himſelf. There is a time when the devil leaves tempting, *Mat.* 4. 11. but no time when corruption ceaſes from working. And laſtly, it oppoſes grace more *advantagiouſly* than any other enemy can do, for it is not only alwayes in the ſame ſoul with it, but it is there naturally; it hath the advantage of the ſoyl which ſuits with it. And yet, oh the wonder of free grace! it is not ſwallowed up in victory, it eſcapes this hazard.

But (2ly.) it ſoon meets with another, though it eſcape this, even by temptations which ſtrike deſperately at the very life of it; for theſe like the weeds, with ſeemingly loving imbraces, claſp about it; and did not the faithful God now make a way to eſcape, inſtead of an Harveſt, we ſhould have an heap: For, alas, what are we! to wreſtle with

with principalities and powers, and ſpiritual wickedneſſes in high places?

Laſtly, ſad relapſes like blaſts and ruſtings do often fade and greatly endanger it, when it's even ready for the Harveſt. Thus it fell out with *David*, whoſe laſt wayes were not like his firſt; and yet by this, theſe holy fruits are not utterly deſtroyed, becauſe it is the ſeed of God; and ſo is immortal, 1 *John* 5. 4, 5. and alſo becauſe the promiſes of perſeverance and victory made to it, cannot be fruſtrated; amongſt which theſe are excellent, *Iſa.* 54. 10. *Jer.* 34. 40. 1 *Cor.* 1. 8. *Pſal.* 1. 3. *Pſal.* 125. 1. *Joh.* 4. 14. So that here is matter of unſpeakable comfort; though the fleſh ſay, *Ego deficiam*, I will fail thee; though the world ſay, *Ego decipiam*, I will deceive thee; though the devil ſay, *Ego eripiam*, I will ſnatch thee away; yet as long as *Chriſt* ſaith, I will never leave thee nor forſake thee; thy graces are ſecure, in the midſt of all theſe enemies.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The Apoſtates Reflection.

THis ſoul of mine was once plowed up by conviction, and ſown (as I thought) with the ſeed of God. In thoſe dayes many purpoſes and good reſolutions began to chink and bud forth, promiſing a bleſſed Harveſt: But O! (with what conſternation and horror ſhould I ſpeak it;) the cares and pleaſures of this life, the luſts and corruptions of my baſe heart ſpringing up, have quite deſtroyed and choakt it; by which it appears, it was not the ſeed of God, as I then imagined it to be; and now my expected Harveſt ſhall be an heap, in the day of grief, and deſperate ſorrow, *Iſa.* 17. 11. I had convictions, but they are gone: troubles for ſin, conſcience of duties, but all is blaſted, and my ſoul is now as a barren field, which God hath curſed.

Wo is me! I have revolted from God, and now that dreadful word, *Jer.* 17. 5, 6. is evidently fulfilled upon me; *For I am like the heath in the deſart, that ſeeth not when good cometh; my ſoul inhabits the parched places of the wilderneſs.* Alas! all my formal and heartleſs duties were but as ſo many

ſcare-

scare-crows in the field, which could not defend these slight workings from being devoured by the infernal fowls. Had these principles been the seed of God, no doubt they would have continued and overcome the world, 1 *Joh.*2.19. Wretched soul! thy case is sad, it will be better with the uncultivated wilderness, than with such a miscarrying soyl, unless the great Husbandman plow thee up the second time, and sow thy heart with better seed.

2. The careless souls reflection

And are the corruptions of my heart to grace, what fowls, weeds, and mildews are to the corn? O what need have I then to watch my heart, and keep it with all diligence; for in the life of that grace is wrapt up the life of my soul. He that carries a candle in his hand in a blustring stormy night, had need to cover it close, lest it be blown out, and he left in darkness. O let me never say, God hath promised it shall persevere, and therefore I need not be so solicitous to preserve it; for as this inference is quite opposite to the nature of true grace and assurance, which never incourage to carelessness, but provoke the soul to an industrious use of means to preserve it. So, it is in it self an irrational and sensless conclusion, which will never follow from any Scripture promise: for although it is readily granted, that God hath made many comfortable and sweet promises to the graces of his people, yet we must expect to enjoy the benefits & blessings of all those promises, in that way and order in which God hath promised them; and that is in the careful and diligent use of those means which he hath prescribed, *Ezek.*36.36,37. for promises do not exclude, but imply the use of means, *Act.* 27.31. I know my life is determined to a day, to an hour, and I shall live out every minute God hath appointed; but yet, I am bound to provide food, raiment and physick to preserve it.

3. The doubting souls reflection

To conclude, let all doubting Christians reflect seriously upon this truth, and suck marrow and fatness out of it to strengthen and establish them against all their fears; your life, your spiritual life, hath for many years hanged in suspence before you; and you have often said with *David*, I shall one day fall by the hand of *Saul*. Desponding, trembling

bling ſoul, lift up thine eyes and look upon the fields; the corn lives ſtill, and grows up: though birds have watcht to devour it, ſnows have covered it, beaſts have cropt it, weeds have almoſt choakt it, yet it's preſerved. And hath not God more care of that precious ſeed of his own ſpirit in thee, than any Husbandman hath of his corn? hath he not ſaid, *That having begun the good work in thee; he will perfect it to the day of Chriſt?* Phil. 2. 6. Hath he not ſaid, *I give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh?* John 12. 28. Haſt thou not many times ſaid, and thought of it, as thou doſt now, and and yet it lives? O, what matter of unſpeakable joy and comfort is this to upright ſouls! Well then, be not diſcharged, for thou doſt not run as one uncertain, nor fight as one that beats the air, 1 *Cor.* 9. 26. but the foundation of God ſtands ſure, having this ſeal, the Lord knows who are his, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. Though thy grace be weak, thy God is ſtrong, though the ſtream ſeem ſometimes to fail, yet it's fed by an ever-flowing fountain.

The *Poem*.

'Tis juſtly wondered that an ear of corn,
Should come at laſt in ſafety to the Barn.
It runs through many hazards, threatning harms
Betwixt the ſowers hands, and reapers arms.
The earth no ſooner takes it from the ſack
But you may ſee behind the ſowers back
(1) Mat. 13. 4, 5 A troop of (1) thieves, which would at once deſtroy
That ſeed in which lyes hid the ſeed of joy.
This dangerous period paſt, it ſoon doth fall
Into a ſecond, no leſs critical.
It ſhooteth forth the tender blade, and then
(2) Mat. 13. 7. The noxious (2) weeds engender it agen.
Theſe claſp about it till they kindly choak
The corn, as flattering Ivy doth the oak.

Are

Are weeds deſtroyed, and all that danger paſt?
Lo now another comes, the worſt at laſt.
For when i'th ear it blow, begins to kern,
As mildew (3) ſmites it which you can't diſcern;
Nor any way prevent, till all be loſt;
The corn deſtroy'd, with all your hopes and coſt.
Thus ſaving grace, that precious ſeed of joy;
Which hell and nature plot (4) how to deſtroy,
Eſcapes ten thouſand (5) danger's firſt and laſt.
O who can ſay now all the danger's paſt?
'Tis like a crazy bark toſt in a ſtorm,
Or like a taper which is ſtrangely born
Without a lanthorn, in a bluſtring night;
Or like to glimmering ſparks whoſe dying light
Is ſtill preſerv'd: The roaring waves ſwell high
Like moving mountains in the darkned sky
On their proud backs, the little bark is even
Mounted unto the battlements of heaven,
From thence diſmounted to the deeps doth ſlide
Receiving water upon every ſide;
Yet he whoſe voice theproudeſt waves obey
Brings it at laſt into the quiet key.
The bluſtring winds ſtrive with a fatal puff,
To bring the tapor to a ſtinking ſnuff;
Their churliſh blaſts extinguiſh it, and then;
Our gentle breath recovers it agen.
The fainting ſparks beneath the aſhes lye,
Where choakt; and ſmother'd they begin to dye;
But theſe collected, we do gently blow,
Till from faint ſparks to lively flames they grow.
Even thus is grace preſerv'd, thus kept alive;
By conſtant wonders, Grace doth live and thrive.

(3) Hag. 2. 16, 17.
(4) Gal. 5. 17.
(5) Rev. 3. 2.

CHAP. XIV.

Upon the patience of the Husbandman for the harveſt

Our Husbandmen for Harveſt wait and ſtay,
O let not any Saint do leſs than they.

OBSERVATION.

THe expectation of a good Harveſt at laſt, makes the Husbandman with untired patience to digeſt all his labours. He that plows, plows in hope, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19. and they are not ſo irrational to think, they ſhall preſently be partakers of their hope, nor ſo fooliſh to anticipate the Harveſt, by cutting down their corn before it be fully ripened, but are content to plow, ſow and weed it; and when it's fully ripe, then they go forth into their fields and reap it down with joy.

APPLICATION.

CAn a little Corn cauſe men to digeſt ſo many difficult labours, and make them wait with invincible patience till the reaping time come? much more ſhould the expectation of eternal glory ſteel and fortifie my ſpirit againſt all intercurrent hardſhips and difficulties. It leaſt of all becomes a Chriſtian to be of an haſty and impatient ſpirit. *Light is ſown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart,* Pſal. 92. 11. *Behold the Husbandman waiteth,* &c. Jam. 5. 7. *Be patient therefore my Brethren, for the coming of the Lord draws neer.* There are three great Arguments to perſwade Chriſtians to a long-ſuffering and patient frame under ſufferings. (1) The example of Chriſt, *Iſa.* 53. 7. to think how quietly he ſuffered all injuries and difficulties with invincible patience, is ſufficient to ſhame the beſt of Chriſtians, who are of ſuch ſhort ſpirits. I have read of one *Elezarius* a noble man

man, that when his wife wondered at his exceeding great patience in bearinig njuries; he thus answered her, You know sometimes my heart is ready to rise with indignation against such as wrong me, but I presently begin to think of the wrongs that Christ suffer'd, and say thus to my self, although thy servant should pluck thy beard, and smite thee on thy face, this were nothing to what thy Lord suffer'd: he suffered more and greater things; and assure your self (wife) I never leave off thinking on the injuries done to my Saviour, till such time as my mind be still and quiet. To this purpose it was well noted by *Bernard*, speaking of Christ's humiliation; was Christ the Lord of glory thus humbled and emptied of his fulness of glory? and shall such a worm as I swell? (2) The desert of sin, *Lam.* 3. 39. *Why doth the living man complain?* It was a good saying of blessed *Greenham*: When sin lyes heavy, affliction lyes light. And it is a famous instance which Dr. *Taylor* gives us of the *Duke* of *Condey*; I have read (saith he) whenthe *Duke* of *Condia* had voluntarily entred into the incommodities of a religious poverty and retirement; he was one day spied and pitied by a Lord of *Italy*, who out of tenderness wisht him to be more careful and nutritive of his person; the good *Duke* answered, Sir, be not troubled, and think not, that I am ill provided of conveniences, for I send an Harbinger before me that makes ready my lodgings, and takes care that I be royally entertained. The Lord asked him, who was his Harbinger? he answered, the knowledge of my self, and the consideration of what I deserve for my sins, which is eternal torments; and when with this knowledge I arrive at my lodging, how unprovided soever I find it, methinks it is ever better than I deserve; and as the sense of sin, which merits hell, sweetens present difficulties: So, (to come home to the present similitude) do the expectations, and hopes of a blessed harvest, and reward in heaven. This made *Abraham* willing to wander up and down many years as a stranger in the world; for he looked for a City that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. The hopes of such a harvest is incouragement enough to work hard, and wait long; yet

Dr. *Taylors* great Exemplar, *p.* 103.

ſome Chriſtians are ſo impatient of it, that they would fain be reaping before the time; but as God hath by an unalterable law of nature, appointed both the ſeaſons of ſeed time and harveſt (which are therefore called the appointed weeks of the harveſt) *Jer.* 5.24. and theſe cannot be haſten'd; but when we have done all that we can on our part, muſt wait till God ſend the former and latter rain, and given every natural cauſe its effect. So is it in reference to our ſpiritual harveſt; we are appointed to ſweat in the uſe of all God's appointments, and when we have done all, muſt patiently wait till the divine decrees be accompliſhed, and the time of the promiſe be fully come; In due time we ſhall reap, if we faint not. To which patient expectation, and quiet waiting for the glory to come, theſe following conſiderations are of excellent uſe.

1. As the Husbandman knows when the Seed-time is paſt, it will not be long to the harveſt; and the longer he waits, the neerer ſtill it is. So the Chriſtian knows, *It is but yet a little while, and he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarry*, Heb. 10.37. *And that now his ſalvation is nearer than when he firſt believed*, Rom. 13.11. What a ſmall point of time is our waiting time, compared with eternity? yet a few dayes more, and then comes the long expected and welcome harveſt.

2. The Husbandman can find other work to do, before the reaping time come; he need not ſtand idle, though he cannot yet reap. And cannot a Chriſtian find any work to do for God, till he come to heaven? O, there is much work to do and ſuch work as is only proper to this ſeaſon. You may now reprove ſin, exhort to duty, ſuccour the diſtreſſed, this is good work, and this is your only time for ſuch work; the whole of eternity will be taken up in other imployments, *I think it meet* (ſaith *Peter*) *as long as I am in this tabernacle, to ſtir up your minds, knowing ſhortly, that I muſt put off this tabernacle*, 2 *Pet.* 1: 13, 14. *q. d.* I know I have but a little time to work among you, I am almoſt at heaven; and therefore am willing to husband this preſent moment as well as I can for you. O Chriſtians! you need not ſtand idle, look round about

about you upon the multitude of forlorn ſinners, ſpeak now to them for God, ſpeak now to God for them; for ſhortly you ſhall ſo ſpeak no more, you ſhall ſee them no more till you ſee them at Chriſt's Bar; God leaves you here for their ſakes, up and be doing: If you had done all you were to do for your ſelves and them, he would have you to heaven immediately, you ſhould not wait a moment longer for your glory.

3. Husbandmen know, though they cannot yet gather in the precious fruits of the earth, yet all this while they are ripening and preparing for the harveſt; they would not houſe it green, or take it before its time. And is not this alſo my preparation time for glory? As God prepared heaven for his people, by an eternal *decree*, Mat. 25. 34. by an act of *creation*, Heb. 11. 10. by the death of Chriſt, which made a purchaſe of it, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20. and by his aſcenſion into it, *Joh.* 14. 2, 3. So the reaſon why we are kept here, is in order to our fitting for it. Heaven is ready, but we are not fully ready; the Barn is fit to receive the corn, but the corn is not yet fit to be gathered into it. *But for this ſelf ſame thing God is now working us*, 2 Cor. 5. 5. he is every day at work, by Ordinances, and by providences, to perfect his work in us; and as ſoon as that is finiſhed, we ſhall hear a voice like that, *Rev.* 11. 12. *Come up hither, and immediately we ſhall be in the ſpirit:* for how ardently ſoever we long for that deſirable day, Chriſt longs for it more than we can do.

4. The Husbandman is glad of the firſt fruits, that incourages him, though the greateſt part be yet out; and have not you received the firſt fruits of that glory? have you no earneſts, pledges, and firſt fruits of it? 'Tis your own fault, if every day you feed not upon ſuch bleſſed comforts of the ſpirit, *Rom.* 8. 23. *Rom.* 5. 2. 1 *Pet.* 8. 9. O how might the interpoſing time, even all the dayes of your patience here, be ſweetned with ſuch prelibations of the glory to come!

5. Husbandmen know 'tis beſt to reap, when 'tis fit to reap; one handful fully ripe, is worth many ſheaves of green corn. And you know, heaven will be ſweeteſt to you, when you are fitteſt for it; the child would pluck the apple while it's green,

green, but he might gather it eaſier, and taſte it ſweeter, by tarrying longer for it. We would fain be glorified *per ſaltum*. When we have got a taſte of heaven, we are all in haſt to be gone. Then, O that I had wings as a dove! I would flie away, and be at reſt. Then we cry to God for our ſelves, as *Moſes* for his ſiſter *Miriam*, *Heal her* [*now*] *O God, I beſeech thee*, Num. 12. 13. Glorifie me now, O Lord, I pray thee! But ſurely, as God hath contrived thy glory in the beſt of wayes, ſo he hath appointed for thee the fitteſt of ſeaſons; and when ever thou art gathered into glory, thou ſhalt come as a ſhock of corn in its ſeaſon.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The longing ſouls reflection

I Have waited for thy ſalvation, O God! Having received thy firſt fruits, my ſoul longs to fill its boſome with the full ripe ſheaves of Glory. *As the Hart panteth for the water brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul for thee, O God*! O, when ſhall I come and appear before God? I deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt. When ſhall I ſee that moſt lovely face? When ſhall I hear his ſoul-tranſporting voice? Some need patience to dye, I need it as much to live! Thy ſights, O God, by faith, have made this world a burden, this body a burden, and this ſoul to cry like thirſty *David*, O that one would give me of the waters of *Bethlehem* to drink! The Husbandman longs for his Harveſt, becauſe it is the reward of all his toyl and labour; but what is his harveſt to mine? what is a little corn to the enjoyment of God? What is the joy of harveſt, to the joy of heaven? what are the ſhoutings of men in the fields, to the acclamations of glorified ſpirits in the kingdome of God? Lord, I have gone forth bearing more precious ſeed than they; when ſhall I return rejoyceing, bringing my ſheaves with me? Their harveſt comes when they receive their corn, mine comes when I leave it. O much deſired harveſt! O day of the gladneſs of my heart! How long Lord! How long! Here I wait as the poor man at *Bethesda's pool*, looking when my turn will come, but every one ſteps into heaven before me; yet Lord, I am

content

content to wait till my time be fully come. I would be content to ſtay for my *glorification*, till I have finiſht the work of my *generation*; and when I have done the will of God, then to receive the promiſe. If thou have any work on earth to uſe me in, I am content to abide: Behold, the Husbandman waiteth, and ſo will I; for thou art a God of judgement, and bleſſed are are all they that wait for thee.

2. The lingring ſouls reflection

But how doth my ſloathful ſoul ſink down into the fleſh, and ſettle it ſelf in the love of this animal life? How doth it hug, and wrap up it ſelf in the garment of this mortality, not deſiring to be removed hence, to the more perfect and bleſſed ſtate? The Husbandman indeed is content to ſtay till the appointed weeks of the Harveſt; but would he be content to wait alwayes? O my ſenſual heart! is this life of hope as contentful to thee, as the life of viſion will be? Why doſt thou not groan within thy ſelf, that this mortality might be ſwallowed up of life? Doth not the ſcripture deſcribe the Saints by their earneſt looking for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus unto eternal life? *Jude* 21. *By their haſtning unto the coming of the day of God*, 2 *Pet.* 3.12. What is the matter that my heart hangs back? doth guilt lye upon my conſcience? Or have I gotten into a pleaſant condition in the world which makes me ſay as *Peter* on the Mount, *It's good to be here*? Or want I the aſſurance of a better ſtate? Muſt God make all my earthly comforts die, before I ſhall be willing to die? Awake Faith, awake my Love; beat up the drowzy deſires of my ſoul, that I may ſay, make haſt my Beloved, and come away.

The

The Poem.

NO prudent Husbandman expects
the fruit of what he ſows,
Till every cauſe have its effects;
(1)John 4.35. and (1) then he reaps and mows.

(2) 1 Cor.9.10 He works in (2) hope the year throughout,
and counts no labour loſt;
If when the ſeaſon comes about
(3)1 Cor.9.10. His harveſt (3) quits his coſt.

(4) Jam. 5.7. This rare (4) example juſtly may
rebuke, and put to ſhame;
My ſoul which ſows its ſeed one day,
and looks to reap the ſame.

(5) Gal. 5.17. Is curſed (5) nature now become
ſo kind a ſoyl to grace,
That to perfection it ſhould come
within ſo ſhort a ſpace.

(6)1 Pet.4.18. Grace ſprings not up with ſpeed and (6) eaſe
like muſhrooms in a night
(7)Rom.1.7. But rather by (7) degrees increaſe
(8)Prov. 4.18. as doth the (8) morning light.

Is corn ſo dear to Husbandmen?
(9)Pſal.4.6,47. much more is (9) heaven to me,
Why ſhould not I have patience then?
to wait as well as he.

(1) Acts 7.17. To promiſes (1) appointed years,
by God's decrees are ſet;
Theſe once expir'd beyond its fears
my ſoul ſhall quickly get.

How

How (2) small a part of hasty time
Which (3) quickly will expire,
Doth me within this world confine,
and then comes my desire.

(2) Heb 13.14.
(3) Heb. 17.10.

Come Lord, (4) how long! my soul hath gasp'd
faith my affections (5) warms.
O when shall my poor soul be clasp'd,
in its redeemers arms.

(4) Rev. 22.17.
(5) Heb. 11.13.

The time seems (6) long, yet here I'le lye
till thou my God do call,
It is enough, eternity
will make (7) amends for all.

(6) Rom. 8.23.
(7) Rom. 8.18.

CHAP. XIX.

Corn fully ripe, is reap'd, and gather'd in.
So must your selves when ripe in grace or sin.

Upon the harvest season.

OBSERVATION.

WHen the fields are white to harvest, then Husbandmen walk through them, rub the ears, and finding the grain full and solid, they presently prepare their Sithes and Sickles, send for their harvestmen, who quickly reap and mow them down; and after these follow the binders, who stitch it up; from the field where it grew, it's carried to the Barn where it is threshed out; the good grain gathered into an heap, the chaff separated and burnt, or thrown to the dunghil, how bare and naked do the fields look after harvest which before were pleasant to behold? When the harvest men enter into the field, it is (to allude to that, *Joel* 2.3.)

before them, like the garden of *Eden*, and behind them a desolate wilderness; and in some places its usual to set fire to the dry stubble, when the corn is housed; which rages furiously, and covers it all with ashes.

APPLICATION.

THe Application of this, I find made to my hands, by Christ himself in *Mat.* 13. 38, 39. *The field is the world, the good seed are the Children of the kingdom, the tares are the children of the wicked one, the enemy that sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the world, the reapers are the Angels.*

The field is the world; there both the godly and ungodly live and grow together, till they be both ripe, and then they shall both be reaped down by death; death is the Sickle that reaps down both. I will open this Allegory in the following particulars.

1. In a catching harvest, when the Husbandman sees the clouds begin to gather and grow black, he hurries in his corn with all possible haste, and houses day and night.

So doth God the great Husbandman, he hurries the Saints into their graves, when judgments are coming upon the world, *Isa.* 57. 1. *The righteous perish and no man layeth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away; none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. Methusalah* died the year before the flood, *Augustine* a little before the sacking of *Hippo*, *Pareus* just before the taking of *Heidleberge*, *Luther* a little before the Wars brake out in *Germany*; but what speak I of single Saints? Sometimes the Lord houses great numbers together, before some sweeping judgement comes. How many bright and glorious stars did set almost together, within the compass of a few years to the astonishment of many wise and tender hearts in *England*. I find some of them ranked in a Funeral *Elegy*.

The learned *Twisse* went first, (it was his right)
Then holy *Palmer*, *Burroughs*, *Love*, *Gouge*, *White*,

Hill

Hill, Whitaker, grave *Gataker* and *Strong,*
Perne, Marſhal, Robinſon, all gone along.
I have not nam'd them half, their only ſtrife,
Hath been (of late) who ſhould firſt part with life.
Theſe few who yet ſurvive, ſick of this age
Long to have done their parts and leave the ſtage.

The Lord ſees it better for them to be under ground than above ground; and therefore by a merciful providence ſets them out of harms way.

2. Neither the corn, or tares, can poſſibly reſiſt the ſharp and keen Sickle, when it's applyed to them by the reapers hand; neither can the godly or ungodly reſiſt the ſtroke of death; when God inflicts it; *Eccleſ.* 8. 8. *No man can keep alive his own ſoul in the day of death, and there is no diſcharge in that war.* The frail body of man is as unable to withſtand that ſtroke, as the weak reeds, or feeble ſtalks of the corn are to reſiſt the keen Sithe and ſharp Sickle.

3. The reapers receive the wheat which they cut down, into their armes and boſom. Hence that expreſſion, by way of imprecation upon the wicked, *Pſal.* 129. 7. *Let them be as the graſs upon the houſe top which withers before it grows up, wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth ſheaves his boſom.* Such withered graſs are the wicked, who are never taken into the reapers boſom; but as ſoon as Saints are cut down by death, they fall into the hands and boſoms of the Angels of God, who bear them in their arms and boſoms to God their father, *Luke* 16. 22. For look, as theſe bleſſed ſpirits did exceedingly rejoyce at their converſion, *Luke* 15. 10. and thought it no diſhonour to miniſter to them whilſt they ſtood in the field *Heb.* 1. 14. So when they are cut down, by death, they will rejoyce to be their convoy to heaven.

4. When the corn and weeds are reap'd or mowed down they ſhall never grow any more in that field; neither ſhall we ever return to live an animal life any more after death *Job* 7. 9, 10. *As the cloud is conſumed and vaniſheth away; ſo he that goeth down to the grave, ſhall come up no more; he ſhall return no more to his houſe, neither ſhall his place know him any more.*

Laſtly, (to come home to the particular object of this Chapter) the reapers are never ſent to cut down the harveſt till it be fully ripe; neither will God reap down Saints or ſinners, till they be come to a maturity of grace or wickedneſs. Saints are not reap'd down till their grace be ripe, *Job* 5. 26. *Thou ſhalt come to thy grave in a full age, as a ſhock of corn cometh in in his ſeaſon.* "Not that every godly man "dies in ſuch a full old age (ſaith Mr. *Caryl* on the place) "but yet in one ſenſe it is an univerſal truth, and ever fulfilled; "for whenſoever they die, they die in a good age; yea, "though they die in the ſpring and flower of their youth, "they die in a good old age, (*i. e.*) they are ripe for death "when ever they die: When ever a godly man dies, it's "harveſt time with him, though in a natural capacity he be "cut down while he is green, and cropt in the bud or bloſ-"ſom; yet in his ſpiritual capacity, he never dies before he "be ripe. God ripens his ſpeedily, when he intends to taks "them out of the world ſpeedily; he can let out ſuch warm "rayes and beams of his ſpirit upon them, as ſhall ſoon "maturate the ſeeds of grace into a preparedneſs for glo-"ry.

The wicked alſo have their ripening time for hell, and judgement; God doth with much long-ſuffering endure the veſſels of wrath, prepared for deſtruction. Of their ripeneſs for judgment the ſcripture often ſpeaks, *Gen.* 15. 16. *The ſin of the* Amorites *is not yet full.* And of *Babilon*, it's ſaid, *Jer.* 51. 13. *O thou that dwelleſt upon many waters, thine end is come and the meaſure of thy covetouſneſs.*

'Tis worth remarking, that the meaſure of the ſin, and the end of the ſinner come together. So *Joel* 3. 13. *Put ye in the ſickle, for the harveſt of the earth is ripe, for the preſs is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedneſs is great.* Where note, ſinners are not cut down till they be ripe and ready. Indeed they are never ripe for death, nor ready for the grave; that is, fit to die: yet they are alwayes ripe for wrath, and ready for hell before they die. Now as Husbandmen judge of the ripeneſs of their harveſt, by the colour and hardneſs of the grain; ſo may we judge of the ripeneſs both of

Saints

Saints and ſinners, for heaven or hell, by theſe following ſigns.

Three Signs of the maturity of grace.

1. WHen the Corn is near ripe, it blows the head, and ſtoops lower than when it was green. When the people of God are near ripe for heaven, they grow more humble and ſelf-denying, than in the dayes of their firſt profeſſion. The longer a Saint grows in this world, the better he is ſtill acquainted with his own heart, and his obligations to God; both which are very humbling things. *Paul* had one foot in heaven, when he called himſelf the chieſeſt of ſinners, and leaſt of Saints, 1 *Tim.* 1.15. *Eph.* 3. 8. A Chriſtian in the progreſs of his knowledge and grace, is like a veſſel caſt into the Sea, the more it fills the deeper it ſinks. Thoſe that went to ſtudy at *Athens* (ſaith *Plutarch*) at firſt coming, ſeemed to themſelves to be wiſe men; afterwards, only lovers of wiſdom, and after that, only thetoricians, ſuch as could ſpeak of wiſdom, but knew little of it, and laſt of all Ideots in their apprehenſions; ſtill with the increaſe of learning, laying aſide their pride and arrogancy.

2. When harveſt is nigh, the grain is more ſolid and pithy than ever it was before; green corn is ſoft and ſpungy, but ripe corn is ſubſtantial and weighty: So it is with Chriſtians; the affections of a young Chriſtian perhaps are more ſerverous and ſprightly, but thoſe of a grown Chriſtian are more judicious and ſolid; their love to Chriſt abounds more and more in all judgment, *Phil.* 1. 9. The limbs of a Child are more active and plyable, but as he grows up to a perfect ſtate, the parts are more conſolidated and firmly knit. The fingers of an old Muſician are not ſo nimble, but he hath a more judicious ear in muſick, than in his youth.

3. When Corn is dead ripe, it's apt to fall of its own accord to the ground, and there ſhed; whereby it doth as it were anticipate the harveſt man, and calls upon him to put in the ſickle. Not unlike to which are the lookings and longings, the

the groanings and haſtenings of ready Chriſtians to their expected glory; they haſten to the coming of the Lord, or as *Montanus* more fitly renders it, they haſten the coming of the the Lord; (*i. e.*) they are urgent and inſtant in their deſires and cryes to haſten his coming; their deſires ſally forth to meet the Lord, they willingly take death by the hand; as the corn bends to the earth, ſo do theſe ſouls to heaven. This ſhews their harveſt to be near.

Six ſigns of the maturity of Sin.

WHen ſinners are even dead ripe for hell, theſe ſigns appear upon them, or by theſe at leaſt, you may conclude thoſe ſouls not to be far from wrath, upon whom they appear.

1. When conſcience is waſted and grown paſt feeling, having no remorſe for ſin; when it ceaſes to check, reprove and ſmite for ſin any more, the day of that ſinner is at hand, his harveſt is even come. The greateſt violation of conſcience is the greateſt of ſins; this was the caſe of the forlorn *Gentiles*, among whom Satan had ſuch a plentiful harveſt; the patience of God ſuffered them to grow till their conſciences were grown ſeared and paſt feeling, *Eph.* 4. 19. When a member is ſo mortified, that if you lance and cut it never ſo much, no freſh blood, or quick fleſh appears, nor doth the man feel any pain in all this, then it's time to cut it off.

When men give themſelves over to the ſatisfaction of their luſts, to commit ſin with greedineſs, then are they grown to a maturity of ſin; when men have ſlipt the reins of conſcience and ruſh headlong into all impiety, then the laſt ſands of Gods patience are running down. Thus *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and the Cities about them in like manner gave themſelves over to wickedneſs and ſtrange ſins; and then juſtice quickly truſs'd them up for an example, ſuffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

3. That man is even ripe for hell, that is become a contriver of

of ſin, a deſigner, a ſtudentin wickedneſs; one would think it ſtrange, that any man ſhould ſet his invention on work, upon ſuch a ſubject as ſin is; that any ſhould ſtudy to become a dexterous artiſt this way, and yet the Scripture frequently ſpeaks of ſuch, *whoſe bellies prepare deceit*, Job 15.35. *who travel in pain to bring forth*, this deformed birth, *ver.*20. *who wink with their eyes*, whilſt plodding wickedneſs, as men uſe to do when they are moſt intent upon the ſtudy of any knotty problem, *Prov.* 6. 13. Theſe have ſo much of hell already in them, that they are more than half in hell already.

He that of a forward Profeſſor, is turn'd a bitter perſecutor, is alſo within a few rounds of the top of the ladder; 4. the contempt of their light, the Lord hath already puniſhed upon them, in their obduracy and madneſs againſt the light. Reader, if thou be gone thus far, thou art almoſt gone beyond all hope of recovery. Towards other ſinners, God uſually exerciſes more patience, but with ſuch he makes ſhort work. When *Judas* turns Traitor to his Lord, he is quickly ſent to his own place. Such as are again intangled and overcome of thoſe luſts they once ſeemed to have clean eſcaped, theſe bring upon themſelves ſwift damnation, and their Iudgment lingers not, 2 *Pet.* 2. 3, 20.

He that can endure no reproof or controul in the way of his ſin, but derides all counſel, and like a ſtrong current, 5. rages at, and ſweeps away all obſtacles in his way, will quickly fall into the dead lake, *Prov.* 29. 1. *He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed and that without remedy.* This is a death ſpot, a hell ſpot, where ever it appears. From this very ſypmtom the Prophet plainly predicted the approaching ruine of *Amaziah*, 2 *Chron.* 25. 16. *I know that God hath determined to deſtroy thee, becauſe thou haſt done this, and haſt not hearkened to my voice.* He that will not be timely *counſelled*, ſhall be quickly *deſtroyed.*

Laſtly, when a man comes to glory in his ſin, and boaſt 6. of his wickedneſs, then its time to cut him down; *whoſe end is deſtruction, whoſe glory is in their ſhame*, Phil. 3. 16. This is a braving, a daring of God to his face, and with whomſoever

ſoever he bears long, to be ſure, theſe are none of them.

You ſee now, what are the ſigns of a full ripe ſinner; and when it comes to this, either with a Nation, or with a ſingle perſon, then ruine is near, *Joel.* 3. 13. *Gen.* 15. 16. It is in the filling up of the meaſure of ſin, as in the filling of a veſſel caſt into the Sea, which rowls from ſide to ſide, taking in the water by litle and litle, till it be full, and then down it ſinks to the bottom. Mean while, admirable is divine patience, which bears with theſe veſſels of wrath, whilſt fitting for deſtruction.

REFLECTIONS.

I. The Reflection of a growing Chriſtian.

CHear thy ſelf, O my ſoul! with the heart ſtrengthening bread of this divine meditation. Let faith turn every drop of this truth into a ſoul-reviving cordial. God hath ſown the precious ſeed of grace upon my ſoul, and though my heart hath been an unkind ſoyl which hath kept it back and much hindered its growth; yet bleſſed be the Lord, it ſtill grows on, though by ſlow degrees; and from the ſpringing of the ſeed, and ſhootings forth of thoſe gracious habits, I may conclude an approaching harveſt: Now is my ſalvation nearer than when I believed; every day I come nearer to my ſalvation, *Rom.* 13. 11. O that every day I were more active for the God of my ſalvation! grow on my ſoul, and add to thy faith vertue, to thy vertue knowledge, &c. Grow on from faith to faith; keep thy ſelf under the ripening influences of heavenly Ordinances; the faſter thou groweſt in grace, the ſooner thou ſhalt be reaped down in mercy, and bound up in the bundle of life, 1 *Sam.* 25. 29. I have not yet attained the meaſure and proportion of grace aſſigned to me, neither am I already perfect, but am reaching forth to the things before me, and preſſing towards the mark for the prize of my heavenly calling, *Phil.* 3. 12, 13. O mercy to be admired! that I who lately had one foot in hell, ſtand now with one foot in heaven!

But

But the caſe is far different with me, whilſt others are ripening apace for heaven, I am withering; many a ſoul plowed up by conviction, and ſown by ſanctification long after me, hath quite over-topt and out-grown me? my ſweet and early bloſſoms were nipt and blown off, my bright morning overcaſt and clouded; had I kept on according to the rate of my firſt growth, I had either now been in heaven, or at leaſt in the ſuburbs of it on earth; but my graces wither and languiſh, my heart contracts and cools to heavenly things; the Sun and rain of ordinances and providences improve not my graces; how ſad therefore is the ſtate of my ſoul?

2. The reflection of a decaying Chriſtian.

Thy caſe, O declining Saint, is ſad! but not like mine; thine is but a temporary remiſſion of the acts of grace, which is recoverable; but I am judicially hardening and *treaſuring up to my ſelf wrath, againſt the day of wrath*, Rom. 2. 5. Time was, when I had ſome tender ſenſe of ſin, when I could mourn and grieve for it, now I have none at all. My heart is grown ſtupid and ſottiſh. Time was when I had ſome conſciencious care of duty, and my heart would ſmite me for the neglect of it; but now none at all. Wretched ſoul! what wilt thou do? thou art gone far indeed, a few ſteps farther will put thee beyond hope; hitherto I ſtand in the field, the long-ſuffering God doth yet ſpare me; yea, ſpare me, whiles he hath cut down many of my companions in ſin round about me. What doth this admirable patience, this long-ſuffering drawn out to a wonder, ſpeak concerning me? Doth it not tell me, that the Lord is not willing I ſhould periſh, but rather come to repentance? 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. And what argument is like his pity and patience, to lead a ſoul to repentance? *Rom.* 2. 4. O that I may not fruſtrate at laſt, the end of a long ſuffering God! leſt he proportion the degrees of his wrath, according to the length of his patience.

3. The Reflection of a hardning ſinner.

The *Poem.*

(1)John 4.35. (2)Rev. 14.15.

WHen fields are (1) white to harveſt, forth you go
With Sith's and (2) Sickles; to reap down and mow.
Down go the laden ears, flat to the ground;
Which thoſe that follow having ſtitcht and bound;
It's carted home unto the Barn, and ſo
The fields are rid; where lately corn did grow.
This world's the (3) field, and they that dwell therein;
The (4) Corn and (5) tares; which long have ripening been.
Angels the (6) reapers, and the judgment day
The time of (7) harveſt when like Corn and hay;
The fading flower of (8) earthly glory muſt
Be mowed down, and level'd with the duſt.
The (9) Barns are heaven and hell; the time draws nigh
When through the darkned (1) clouds, and troubled skie
The Lord ſhall break, a dreadful (2) trumpet ſhall
Sound to the dead, the ſtars from heaven fall.
The rowling ſphears with (3) horrid flames ſhall burn,
And then the Tribes on earth ſhall (4) wail and mourn.
The judgment ſet, before Chriſts awful throne
All fleſh ſhall be (5) conven'd, and every one
Receive his doom: which done, the juſt ſhall be
Bound in lifes bundle; (6) even as you ſee
The full ripe ears of wheat bound up, and born
In ſheaves with joy; unto the owners barn.
This done, the Angels next in (7) bundles binde
The tares together, as they did combinde
In acting ſin, ſo now their lot muſt be
To burn together in one miſery.
Drunkards with drunkards pinion'd, ſhall be ſent
To hell together in one (8) Regiment.
Adulterers and ſwearers there ſhall lye
In flames, among their old ſociety.
O dreadful (9) howlings! O the hideous moans
Of fetter'd ſinners! O the tears! the groans!

(3)Mat.13.38. (4) *ibid.* (5) *ibid.* (6)Mat.13.39. (7)*ibid.* (8)2Pet.3.10

(9)Mat.13.30. (1) Rev. 1.7. (2)1Theſ.4.16 (3)2Pet.3.10. (4)Mat.24.30. (5)2Cor.5.10. (6)Mat.13.30. (7)*ibid.* (8)1 Cor. 6.9. (9)Mat.13. 41, 42.

The doleful lamentations as they go
Chain'd faſt together, to their place of woe.
The world thus clear'd, as fields when harveſt's in,
Shall be no more a ſtage for acting ſin.
With purifying (1) flames it ſhall be burn'd, (1) 2 Per. 3. 10.
Its ſtately fabricks into aſhes turn'd.
Ceaſe then my ſoul, to dote on, or admire
This ſplendid world, which is reſerv'd for fire.
Decline the company of ſinners here,
As thou wouldſt not be ſhackel'd with them there.

CHAP. XVI.

Your winter ſtore in Summer you provide;
To Chriſtian prudence this muſt be apply'd.

Upon the care of Husbandmen to provide for winter.

OBSERVATION.

GOod husbands are careful in Summer to provide for Winter, then they gather in their Winter ſtore; food and fewel for themſelves, and fodder for their cattel. *He that gathers in Summer is a wiſe ſon, but he that ſleeps in harveſt is a ſon that cauſes ſhame*, Prov. 10. 5. A well choſen ſeaſon is the greateſt advantage to any action, which as it is ſeldom found in haſte, ſo it is often loſt by delay. 'Tis a good proverb which the frugal *Dutch* have among them; *Bonus Servatius, facit bonum Bonifacium*; a good Saver, will make a good Benefactor. And 'tis a good Proverb of our own; He that neglects the occaſion, the occaſion will neglect him. Husbandmen know that Summer will not hold all the year, neither will they truſt to the hopes of a mild and favourable Winter, but in ſeaſon provide for the worſt.

APPLICATION.

WHat excellent Chriſtians ſhould we be, were we but as provident and thoughtful for our ſouls? 'tis doubtleſs a ſingular point of Chriſtian wiſdom, to foreſee a day of ſpiritual ſtraits and neceſſities, and during the day of grace to make proviſion for it. This great Goſpel truth is excellently ſhadowed forth in this natural Obſervation, which I ſhall branch out into theſe ſeven particulars.

1. Husbandmen know there is a change, and viciſſitude of ſeaſons and weather; though it be pleaſant Summer weather now, yet Winter will tread upon the heel of Summer; froſts, Snows, and great falls of rain muſt be expected. This alternate courſe of ſeaſons in nature is ſetled by a firm Law of the God of nature, to the end of the world, *Gen.* 8.22. *Whilſt the earth remaineth, ſeed time and harveſt, cold and heat, winter and ſummer, day and night, ſhall not ceaſe.*

And Chriſtians know, that there are changes in the right hand of the moſt High, in referrence to their ſpiritual ſeaſons. If there be a *Spring time* of the Goſpel, there will alſo be an *Autumn*; if a day of *proſperity*, it will ſet in a night of *adverſity*; *for God hath ſet the one over againſt the other*, Eccleſ. 7.14. In heaven there is a day of everlaſting ſerenity, in hell a night of perfect and endleſs horror and darkneſs; on earth, light and darkneſs take their turns, proſperity and adverſity, even to ſouls as well as bodies, ſucceed each other. If there be a Goſpel day, a day of grace now current, it will have its period and determination, *Gen.* 3.6.

2. Common prudence and experience enables the Husbandman, in the midſt of Summer, to foreſee a Winter, and provide for it before he feel it; yea natural inſtinct teaches this to the very birds of the air, and beaſts of the field.

And ſpiritual wiſdome ſhould teach Chriſtians to exerciſe their foreſeeing faculties, and not ſuffer them to feel evil before they fear it. But O the ſtupifying nature of ſin! Though the Stork in the heavens knows her appointed time, and the Turtle, Crane and Swallow the time of their coming

ing, yet man, whom God hath made wiſer than the fowls of the air, in this acts quite below them, *Jer.* 8. 7.

3. The end of Gods ordaining a ſummer ſeaſon, and ſending warm and pleaſant weather, is to ripen the fruits of the earth, and give the Husbandman fit opportunity to gather them in.

And God's deſign in giving men a day of grace, is to furniſh them with an opportunity for the everlaſting happineſs and ſalvation of their ſouls, *Rev.* 2. 21. *I gave her a ſpace to repent.* It is not a meer reprieval of the ſoul, or only a delay of the execution of threatned wrath, though there be much mercy in that; but the peculiar aim of this patience and bounty of God, is to open for them a way to eſcape the wrath to come, *by leading them to repentance*, Rom. 2. 4.

The Husbandman doth not find all harveſt ſeaſons alike favourable, ſometimes they have much fair weather, and meet with no hindrance in their buſineſs; other times 'tis a catching harveſt, but now and then a fair day, and then they muſt be nimble or all is loſt.

4. There is alſo great difference in Soul-ſeaſons, ſome have had a long and a fair ſeaſon of grace; an hundred and twenty years did God wait upon the old world, in the Miniſtry of *Noah.* Long did God wait on the gainſaying *Iſraelites*, Iſa. 42. 14. *I have a long time held my peace, I have been ſtill and refrained my ſelf.* Others have a ſhort and catching ſeaſon, all lies upon a day, upon a nick of time, *Act.* 17. 30.

5. A proper ſeaſon neglected and loſt, is irrecoverable. Many things in Husbandry muſt be done in their ſeaſon, or cannot be done at all for that year; if he plow not, and ſow not in the proper time, he loſes the harveſt of that year.

'Tis even ſo as to ſpiritual ſeaſons. Chriſt neglected, and grace deſpiſed, in the ſeaſon when God offers them, are irrecoverably loſt, *Prov.* 1. 28. then (that is, when the ſeaſon is over) they ſhall call upon me but I will not hear. O, there is a great deal of time in a ſhort opportunity! that may be done or prevented, in an hour rightly timed, which cannot be done or prevented in a mans life-time afterwards. There was one reſolved to kill *Julius Cæſar* ſuch a day; the night before

before, a friend ſent him a letter to acquaint him with it, but he being at ſupper, and buſie in diſcourſe, ſaid, to morrow is a new day, and indeed it was, *dies noviſſima*, his laſt day to him; whence it became a Proverb in *Greece*. *To morrow is a new day.* Our glaſs runs in heaven, and we cannot ſee how much or little of the ſand of God's patience is yet to run down; but this is certain, when that glaſs is run, there is nothing to be done for our ſouls, *Luke* 19. 42. *O that thou hadſt known at leaſt in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.*

6. Thoſe Husbandmen that are careful and laborious in the Summer, have the comfort and benefit of it in Winter; he that then provides fewel, ſhall ſit warm in his habitation, when others blow their fingers. He that provides food for his family, and fodder for his cattel in the harveſt, ſhall eat the fruit of it, and enjoy the comfort of his labours, when others ſhall be expoſed to ſhifts and ſtraits. And he that provides for eternity, and layes up for his ſoul a good foundation againſt the time to come, ſhall eat when others are hungry, and ſing when others howl, *Iſa.* 65. 13. A day of death will come, and that will be a day of ſtraits to all negligent ſouls; but then the diligent Chriſtian ſhall enjoy the peace and comfort that ſhall flow in upon his heart, from his holy care and ſincere diligence in duties? as 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. *This is our rejoycing, the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in all ſincerity and godly ſimplicity, we have had our converſation in this world.* So *Hezekiah*, 2 *King.* 20. 3. *Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart.* A day of judgement will come, and then fooliſh virgins, who neglected the ſeaſon of getting oyl in their lamps, will be put to their ſhifts; then they come to the wiſe, and ſay, give us of your oyl, *Mat.* 25. 8, 9. but they have none to ſpare, and the ſeaſon of buying is then over.

7. No wiſe Husbandman will neglect a fit opportunity of gathering in his hay and corn, upon a preſumption of much fair weather to come; he will not ſay, the weather is ſetled, and I need not trouble my ſelf, though my corn and hay be fit for the houſe, yet I may get it in another time as well as now.

And

And no wise Christian will lose a present season for his soul, upon the hopes of much more time yet to come; but will rather say, now is my time, and I know not what will be hereafter; hereafter I may wish to see one of the dayes of the Son of man, and not see it, *Luke* 17. 22. 'Tis sad to hear how cunning some men are to dispute themselves out of heaven, as if the devil had hired them to plead against their own souls; sometimes urging the example of those that were called at the eleventh hour, *Mat.* 20. 6. and sometimes that of the penitent thief: But, O! to how little purpose is the former pleaded; they that were called at the eleventh hour were never called before, as these have been, no man had hired; that is, called or invited them to Christ, and for the thief, (as Mr. *Fenner* rightly observes) it was a singular and extraordinary example. It was done when Christ hang'd on the Cross, and was to be inaugurated; then Kings manifest such bounty, and pardon such crimes, as are never pardoned afterwards. Besides, God was then in a way of working miracles; then he rent the rocks, open'd the graves, raised the dead, and converted this thief; but God is now out of that way.

REFLECTIONS.

I. The careless souls reflection

I Have indeed been a good Husband for the world; with what care and providence have I looked out for my self and family, to provide food to nourish them, and cloaths to defend them against the asperities of Winter? mean while neglecting to make provision for eternity, or take care for my soul. O my destitute soul! how much have I slighted and undervalued thee? I have taken more care for an horse or an ox, than for thee; a well stored-barn, but an empty soul. Will it not shortly be with me, as with that careless Mother, who when her house was on fire, busily bestir'd her self to save the goods, but forgot the child? (though it were saved by another hand) and then minding her child, ran up and down like one distracted wringing her hands, and crying, O my child, my child! I have saved my goods, and lost my

my child, ſuch will be the caſe of thee, my ſoul, *Mat.* 16. 26. Beſides how eaſie will my conviction be at the Bar of Chriſt? will not my providence and care for the things of this life, leave me ſpeechleſs and ſelf-condemned in that day? What ſhall I anſwer when the Lord ſhall ſay, Thou couldſt foreſee a Winter, and ſeaſonably provide for it? yea, thou hadſt ſo much care of thy very beaſts, to provide for their neceſſities, and why tookeſt thou no care for thy ſoul? was that only not worth the caring for?

2. The preſumptuous ſouls Reflection.

Is it ſo dangerous to neglect a preſent proper ſeaſon of grace? What then have I done, who have ſuffered many ſuch ſeaſons to die away in my hand, upon a groundleſs hope of future opportunities! Ah, deluded wretch! what if that ſuppoſition fail? where am I then? I am not the Lord of time, neither am I ſure, that he who is, will ever vouchſafe an hour of grace in old age, to him that hath neglected many ſuch hours in youth; neither indeed is it ordinary for God ſo to do. 'Tis ſtoried of *Caius Marius Victorius*, who lived about 300 years after Chriſt, and to his old age continued a *Pagan*, but at laſt being convinced of the Chriſtian verity, he came to *Simplicianus* and told him, he would be a Chriſtian; but neither he, nor the Church could believe it, it being ſo rare an example for any to be converted at his age: But at laſt ſeeing it was real, there was a ſhouting and gladneſs, and ſinging of Pſalms in all Churches, the people crying *Caius Marius Victorius* is become a Chriſtian. This was written for a wonder, and what ground have I to think, that God will work ſuch wonders for me, who have neglected his ordinary means of ſalvation?

3. The induſtrious ſouls Reflection.

Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul! who gave thee a ſeaſon, a day for eternal life, which is more than he hath done for thouſands; yea, bleſs the Lord for giving thee an heart to underſtand and improve that ſeaſon, I confeſs I have not improved it as I ought; yet, this I can (through mercy) ſay, that how ever it fare in future times, with my outward man, though I have no treaſures or ſtores laid up on earth, or if I have, they are but corruptible, yet I have a bleſſed hope laid up in heaven, *Col.* 1. 5. I have bags that wax not old. Whilſt worldlings

worldlings rejoyce in their ſtores and heaps, I will rejoyce in theſe eternal treaſures.

The *Poem.*

OBſerve in Summers ſultry heat,
how in the (1) hotteſt day:
The Husbandman doth toyl and (2) ſweat:
about his Corn and Hay.

If then he ſhould not reap and mow,
and (3) gather in his ſtore;
How ſhould he live, when for the ſnow
he can't move out of door?

The little (4) Ants, and painful Bees;
by natures inſtinct led;
Theſe have their Summer granaries,
for Winter furniſhed.

But thou my ſoul, whoſe Summers day
is almoſt paſt and gone;
What ſoul-proviſion doſt thou (5) lay
in (6) ſtock, to ſpend upon?

If (7) nature teacheth to prepare
for temporal life, much rather
Grace ſhould provoke to (8) greater care,
ſoul food in time to gather.

Dayes of affliction, and diſtreſs
are (9) haſting on apace,
If now I live in careleſsneſs;
how ſad will be my caſe!

(1) Job 7. 2.
(2) Gen. 3. 19.
(3) Prov. 10. 5.
(4) Prov. 6. 6, 7
(5) Mat. 6. 20.
(6) 1 Tim. 6. 10
(7) Jer. 8. 7.
(8) Mar. 16. 16.
(9) Zeph. 2. 2, 3

(1) Iſa. 32. 9.

Unworthy of the name (1) of man,
who for that ſoul of thine;
Wilt not do that which others can
do for their very kine.

Think frugal Farmers, when you ſee
your mows of Corn and Hay;
(2) Luke 12. 18, 20. What a (2) conviction this will be
to you, another day.

Who ne're were up before the Sun,
nor break an hours reſt;
For your poor ſouls, as you have done
ſo often, for a beaſt.

(3) 2 Cor. 4. 18. (4) 1 Cor. 7. 31 (5) Prov. 23. 5. Learn once to ſee the difference,
betwixt (3) eternal things;
And theſe poor (4) tranſient things of fence:
that fly with (5) eagles wings.

CHAP. XVII.

Upon reaping the ſame we ſow.

When from Tare ſeeds, you ſee choice Wheat to grow,
Then from your luſts, may joy and comfort flow.

OBSERVATION.

GOd gives to every ſeed its own body, 1 *Cor.* 15. 38. At firſt he created every Tree and herb of the field, having its ſeed in it ſelf, for the conſervation of the *ſpecies*; and they all inviolably obſerve the Law of their Creation. All fruits naturally riſe out of the ſeeds, and roots proper to them. *Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thiſtles.*

Such

Such productions would be monstrous in nature; and although the juice or sap of the earth be the common matter of all kind of fruits, yet it is specificated according to the different sorts of Plants and seeds it nourishes. Where Wheat is sown, it's turned into Wheat; in an apple Tree, it becomes an apple; and so in every sort of Plants or seeds, it's concocted into fruit proper to the kind.

APPLICATION.

TRanslate this into spirituals, and the proposition shadowed forth by it, is fully expressed by the Apostle, *Gal. 6. 7. What a man sows, that shall he reap; they that sow to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; and they that sow to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.* And as sure as the harvest follows the seed-time, so sure shall such fruits and effects result from the seeds of such actions. *He that soweth iniquity, shall reap vanity*, Prov. 22. 8. *And they that now go forth weeping, and bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoycing bringing their sheaves with them*, Psal. 126. 5. The sum of all is this, That our present actions have the same respect and relation to future rewards and punishments, as the seed we sow in our fields, hath to the harvest we reap from it. Every gracious action is the seed of joy, and every sinful action the seed of anguish and sorrow, to the soul that sowed it. Two things are sensibly presented to us in this similitude.

That as the seed sown, is presently covered from our sight under the clods, and for some time after we see no more of it, and yet at last it appears again, by which it's evident to us that it is not finally lost: So our present actions, though *physically* transient, and perhaps forgotten, yet are not lost, but after a time shall appear again in order to a retribution. 1.

If this were not so, all good and holy actions would be to the loss of him that performed them. All the self-denial, spending duties, and sharp sufferings of the people of God, would turn to their damage, though not in point of honesty,

yet in point of perſonal utility; and then alſo, what difference would there be betwixt the actions of a man and a beaſt, with reſpect to future good or evil? yea, man would then be more feared and obeyed than God, and ſouls be ſwayed in all their motions, only by the influence of preſent things; and where then would Religion be found in the world? 'Tis an excellent note of *Drexellius*; "Our works "(ſaith he) do not paſs away as ſoon as they are done, but as "ſeed ſown, ſhall after a time riſe up to all eternity; whatever we think, ſpeak or do, once ſpoken, thought or done, is eternal, and abides for ever.

Drexellius de æternitate prope fin.

What *Zeuxes* the famous *Limner* ſaid of his work, may be truly ſaid of all our works; *Æternitati pingo*, I paint for eternity. O, how careful ſhould men be of what they ſpeak and do, whilſt they are commanded ſo to ſpeak, and ſo to do, as thoſe that ſhall be judged by the perfect law of liberty, *Jam.*2.12. What more tranſient than a vain word? and yet for ſuch words, men ſhall give an account in the day of judgment, *Mat.*12.36. That's the firſt thing; Actions like ſeed, ſhall riſe and appear again in order to a retribution.

2. The other thing held forth in this ſimilitude is, That according to the nature of our actions now, will be the fruit and reward of them then. Though the fruit or conſequence of holy actions, for the preſent may ſeem bitter, and the fruit of ſinful actions ſweet and pleaſant, yet there is nothing more certain, than that their future fruits ſhall be according to their preſent nature and quality, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. Then *Dioniſius* ſhall retract that ſaying, *Ecce quam proſpera navigatio a Deo datur ſacrilegis*; Behold how God favours our ſacriledges. Sometimes indeed (though but rarely) God cauſes ſinners to reap in this world, the ſame that they have ſown; as hath been their ſin, ſuch hath been their puniſhment. It was openly confeſſed by *Adonibezek*, Judg. 1. 7. as I have done, ſo hath God requited me.

Socrates in his Church Hiſtory furniſhes us with a pertinent paſſage to this purpoſe, concerning *Valens* the *Emperor*, who was an *Arrian*, and a bitter perſecutor of the Chriſtians: This man, when eighty of the Orthodox Chriſtians ſailed from

from *Conſtantinople* to *Nicomedia*, to treat with him about the points of *Arrianiſm*, and to ſettle the matter by way of diſpute; the *Emperour* hearing of their arrival, while they were yet in the Harbour, and not a man landed, cauſed the Ships to be fired wherein they were, and ſo conſumed them all. Not long after, in his Wars againſt the *Goths*, he was overthrown; and hiding himſelf in a little Cottage, the enemy coming by, burnt it and him together. Thus this wretch reap'd what he ſowed, burning for burning, the very ſame in kind paid him again; it is not alwayes ſo in this world, but ſo it ſhall be in that to come; the Table ſhall then be turned, and the *Scene* altered; for ſhall not the Judge of all the world do righteouſly? *Diogenes* was tempted to think, that God had caſt off the government of the world, when he ſaw the wicked proſper in their wickedneſs. On the ſame ground, many have been tempted to *Atheiſm*; but then the world ſhall ſee diſtributive juſtice ſhining out in its glory. *Tribulation, anguiſh and wrath, to every ſoul of man that doth evil; but glory, honour and peace, to every man that worketh good*, Rom. 2. 9, 10. Then 'twill appear what ſeed we ſowed, what lives we lived; for God ſhall bring every work into judgement, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good or evil, *Eccleſ.* 12. 14.

Cum video mala fata bonis, ignoſcite queſo: ſollicitor nullos eſſe putare Deos. Ovid.

REFLECTIONS.

THis Meditation may be to me what the hand-writing upon the wall was to that profane Prince, *Dan.* 5. 5, 6. and a like effect it ſhould have upon me; for if all the actions of this life be ſeed ſown for the next, Lord, what a crop, what a dreadful harveſt am I like to have? how many oaths and curſes, lyes and vain words, have I ſown with my tongue, how have I wronged, oppreſſed, and over-reached in my dealings? ruſhed into all profaneneſs, drunkenneſs, uncleanneſs, Sabbath-breaking, &c. *as the horſe ruſheth into the battel*; and what ſhall I reap from ſuch ſeed as this, but vengeance and fury? Theſe ſins ſeemed pleaſant in the commiſſion, but O, how bitter will they be in their account? *What*

1 The profane perſons Reflection.

ſhall

ſhall I do when God riſeth up? and when he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer him? Job 31. 14. Is it not reaſonable and juſt, (O my ſoul) that thou ſhouldeſt eat the fruit of thine own planting, and reap what thou haſt ſown? I thought nothing but profit and pleaſure would ſpring from my luſts, but now I ſee 'tis a root bearing gall and wormwood, *Deut.* 29. 18. Wretched ſoul, what ſhall I do? if theſe actions be not, then am I undone. I have been the author of mine own ruin, 'twiſted an halter with mine own fingers, for the execution of mine own ſoul! O, let me rather taſte the bitterneſs of ſin, by repentance now, than enjoy its preſent pleaſures, which betray the ſoul to endleſs wrath!

2. The moral mans Reflection.

How have I alſo been deceived in this matter? I verily thought that glory and immortality would have been the fruit and product of my moral honeſty and righteouſneſs, that joy and peace had been ſeminally contained in thoſe actions; but now I ſee ſuch fruit can ſpring from no other root but ſpecial grace. Glory is diſcloſed from no other bud but holineſs. Alas! all my planting and ſowing was to little purpoſe, becauſe I ſowed not the right kind of ſeed; the beſt fruit I can expect from this, is but a leſſer degree of damnation.

3. The holy ſouls Reflection.

Deluded ſoul, thy ſeed is no better than what the *moral Heathens* ſowed; and do I expect better fruit than what they reaped? Civility without Chriſt, is but a freer ſlavery; and Satan holds me as faſt in captivity by this, as he doth the prophane by the pleaſure of their luſts; either I muſt ſow better ſeed, or look to reap bitter fruit.

Mean while, bleſs the Lord (O my ſoul) who inabled thee to ſow better ſeed! who kept thee watching, humbling thy ſelf and praying, whilſt others have been ſwearing, drinking and blaſpheming. This will yield thee the fruit of joy in the world to come; yea, it already yields preſent peace to thy conſcience. Theſe revenues are better than gold, ſweeter than the honey, and the honey-comb; not that ſuch fruits are meritoriouſly contained in theſe actions, I ſow to my ſelf in righteouſneſs, but I reap in mercy, *Hoſ.* 10. 12. This is the way in which God will ſave and glorifie me. O then, let me

be

be ever abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that my labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

The *Poem.*

'TWould be a strange and monstrous thing to see
Cherries, or Plums grow on an apple Tree.
Who ever gather'd from the (1) thistle Figs? (1) Mat. 7. 16.
Or fruitful Grapes from off the worthless twigs
Of pricking thorns? in nature still we find
All its productions (2) answering to their kind. (2) Gen. 1. 11.
As are the Plants we set, or seeds we sow;
Such is the (3) fruit we shake, and corn we mow. (3) Job 4. 7.
And canst thou think that from corruptions root,
Thy soul shall pluck the sweet and pleasant fruit
Of spiritual peace? who ever that was wise,
Abus'd himself with such (4) absurdities? (4) Jam. 1. 22.
Look what you sow, the very same you'l reap.
The fruit of what you plant, be sure you'l eat.
How are they (5) baffled by a subtil devil? (5) Gal. 6. 7.
That hope for heaven, whilst their wayes are evil.
Such reasonings here their credulous souls beguil,
At which in other things, themselves would smile.
Our present acts though slightly passed by,
Are so much (6) seed, sown for eternity. (6) Gal. 6. 7.
The seeds of prayers, secret groans and tears;
Will shoot at last into the full blown ears,
Of peace and joy. (7) Blessed are they that sow
Beside these waters, yea, thrice blest that go (7) Psal. 126. 5.
Bearing such precious seed; though now they mourn,
With joyful sheaves, they shortly shall return.
Needs must the full ripe fruits in heaven be good,
When as the seed was glory in the bud.
But O, the (8) bitter, baneful fruits of sin! (8) Deut. 29. 18
When all the (9) pleasure sinners have therein (9) Heb. 11. 25

Like

Like faded bloſſoms to the ground ſhall fall,
Then they will taſte the wormwood and the gall.
What God and conſcience now of ſin report,
(1) Prov. 14. 9 You ſlight, and with their dreadful threatnings (1) ſport.
But he'l convince you then, your wayes were naught,
(2) Judg. 8. 7. As *Gideon* the men of (2) *Succoth* taught.
If Sermons cannot, fire and brimſtone muſt
Teach men how good it is to pamper luſt.
(3) Mark 9. 44 When conſcience (3) takes thee by the throat and cryes
Now wretch, now ſinner, thou that didſt deſpiſe
My warnings; learn, and ever learning be
That Leſſon, which thou ne're wouldſt learn of me.
The ſtouteſt ſinner then will howl and roar,
O ſin! I never ſaw thy face before.
Is this the fruit of ſin? is this the place
Where I muſt lye? is this indeed the caſe
Of my poor ſoul! muſt I be bound in chains
With theſe companions? Oh, is this the gains
I get by ſin! poor wretch, I that would never
See this before, am now undone for ever.

CHAP. XVIII.

Upon the joy of Harveſt men

Great is the joy of Harveſt men, yet leſs
Than theirs, whom God doth with his favour bleſs.

OBSERVATION.

AMong all earthly joyes, theſe four ſorts are noted in Scripture, as the moſt excellent and remarkable, (1) *Nuptial joyes*, the day of Eſpouſals is the day of the gladneſs of a mans heart, *Cant.* 3. 11. (2) *The joy of children.* Though now it ſeem but a common mercy to moſt, and a burden

den to ſome; yet the people of God were wont to eſteem it a choice mercy, and rejoyced greatly in it. *John* 16. 21. there's joy that a man is born into the world. (3) *The joy of conqueſts* and victories, when men divide the ſpoyl. And laſtly, *The joy of Harveſt*; theſe two we find put together as principal matters of joy, *Iſa.* 9. 3. *They joy before thee, according to the joy in Harveſt, and as men rejoyce when they divide the ſpoyl.* The joy of Harveſt is no ſmall joy; *Gaudium meſſis, eſt meſſis gaudii*, the joy of harveſt, is the harveſt of their joy. 'Tis uſual with men, when they have reaped down their harveſt, (or cut the neck, as they call it) to demonſtrate their joy by ſhoutings, and loud acclamations.

APPLICATION.

THus, and unſpeakably more than thus, do Saints rejoyce and ſhout for joy, when they reap the favour and love of God, for which they laboured in many a weary duty. This joy of harveſt, as great as it is, and as much as carnal hearts are lifted up with it, is but a trifle, a thing of nought, compared with yours; after they have ſown to themſelves in righteouſneſs, and waited for the effects and returns of their duties with patience, and at laſt come to reap in mercy, either the full harveſt in heaven, or but the firſt fruits of it on earth, yet rejoyce, *with joy unſpeakable and full of glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 8. *This puts more gladneſs into their hearts, than when corn and wine increaſes*, Pſal. 4. 7. Carnal joyes are but ſoul-Fevers, the Agues of the inner-man; there is as great difference betwixt the unnatural inflamations of a feveriſh body which waſtes their ſpirits, and drinks up the radical moiſture, and that kindly well-tempered heat of an healthy body; and as much between the ſweet, ſerene and heavenly joyes, which flow from the boſom of *Chriſt* into the hearts of believers, and thoſe earthly delights which carnal hearts in a ſenſual way ſuck out of creature-enjoyments. I will ſhew you the tranſcendency of ſpiritual joyes, above the joy of harveſt, in theſe eight particulars following.

1. You that joy with the joy of harveſt, are glad, becauſe now

now you have food for your ſelves and families to live upon all the year; but the Chriſtian rejoyceth, becauſe he hath bread to eat, that the world knows not of, *Rev.* 2. 17. Chriſt is the food of his ſoul, and his fleſh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, *John* 5. 55. (*i.e.*) the moſt real and excellent food. You read, *Pſal.* 78. 25. that man did eat Angels food (*i.e.*) Manna, which was ſuch excellent bread, that if Angels did live upon material food, this would be choſen for them; and yet this is but a type and dark ſhadow of *Jeſus Chriſt*, the food of believers.

2. You rejoyce when your harveſt is in, becauſe corn is virtually many other things beſides food; you can turn it into cloaths to keep you warm, and many other neceſſaries may be purchaſed by it: but yet it is not like Chriſt, the object of a Saints joy; though it anſwers many things, it doth not anſwer all things as Chriſt doth; turn it into what you will, it hath but a limited and reſpective uſefulneſs: but Jeſus Chriſt is all in all to believers, and out of him their faith can fetch all ſupplies; he is their health in ſickneſs, their ſtrength in weakneſs, their eaſe in pain, their honour in reproach, their wealth in poverty, their friend in friendleſſneſs, their habitation when harbourleſs, their enlargement in bonds, the ſtrength of their hearts, and life of their life. O he is a full Chriſt, and what ever excellencies are ſcattered among all the creatures, do meet all in him, and much more.

3. You rejoyce when you have gotten in your harveſt, becauſe now you can free thoſe engagements, and pay thoſe debts which you have contracted. 'Tis a comfort to be out of debt, and you may lawfully rejoyce that God gives you wherewith to quit your engagements, that you may owe no man any thing but love: but ſtill the joy of harveſt falls ſhort of the joy of Saints; for you rejoyce that you are, or have wherewith to help your ſelves out of mens debts: but they rejoyce that they are out of God's debt, that his book is cancelled, and their ſins pardoned; that by reaſon of the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt, the Law can demand nothing from them, *Rom.* 8. 1. O, what matter of joy is this!

You

You rejoyce, becauſe now your corn is out of danger, all the while it was abroad it was in hazard, but now it's houſed you fear not the rain. But Chriſtians rejoyce, not becauſe their corn is ſafe, but becauſe their ſouls are ſo. All the while they abode in an unregenerate ſtate, they were every moment in danger of the ſtorms of wrath; but now being in Chriſt, that danger is over; and what compare is there betwixt the ſafety of a little corn, and the ſecurity of an immortal ſoul? 4.

Your joy is but in a gift of common providence. *Turks* and *Heathens* can rejoyce with your joy, but the joy of a Chriſtian is a peculiar favour and gift of God. Corn is given to all Nations, even the moſt barbarous and wicked have ſtore of it; but Chriſt is the portion but of a few, and thoſe the dearly beloved of God. *Luther* ſaid of the whole *Turkiſh Empire* (where is the beſt and greateſt ſtore of corn) that it is but a crumb which the Maſter of the Family throws to the dogs. He that had more corn than his Barns could hold, now wants a drop of water to cool his tongue. Chriſt is a gift beſtowed only upon God's Elect. 5.

Your joy will have an end; the time is coming, that when you have reaped down your harveſts, your ſelves muſt be reaped down by death, and then you ſhall rejoyce in theſe things no more; but when your joy is ended, then is the joy of Saints perfected; they reap their harveſt, when you leave your harveſt: their conſolation is everlaſting. 6.

God can ſeparate your joy from theſe ejoyments, even while you have them, as well as when you leave them. 'Tis one thing for a man to have riches and full Barns, and another thing to have comfort in them, *Eccleſ.* 5. 19, 20. But now the joy of Chriſtians is a thing inſeparable from their enjoyment of Chriſt: Indeed the ſenſe of their intereſt may be loſt, and ſo the acts of their joy intermitted; but they alwayes have it in the ſeed, if not in the fruit, *Pſal.* 97. 11. *Joy is ſown for the upright*; he hath it ſtill in the principle, and in the promiſe. 7.

The joy of Harveſt-men, for the moſt part, is only in their harveſt, and in ſuch earthly things, take that away, and their 8.

joy ceaſes. Earthly hearts are acquainted with no higher comforts; but the people of God can joy in him, and take comfort in their earthly enjoyments too; and what comfort they take in theſe things, is much more refined and ſweet than yours; for they enjoy all theſe things in God, and his love in giving them, puts a ſweetneſs into them, that you are unacquainted with. Thus you ſee, how far your joy falls ſhort of theirs.

REFLECTIONS.

1. A Reflection for one that hath a full Barn but no Chriſt.

HOw have I rejoyced in a thing of nought, and pleaſed my ſelf with a vanity? God hath bleſſed me in my fields, and in my ſtores; but not with ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt. My Barns are full of corn, but my ſoul is empty of grace; common bounty hath given me a fulneſs of the things of this life, but what if the meaning of it ſhould be to fat me for the day of ſlaughter? what if this be the whole of my portion from the Lord? what if the language of his providences to my ſoul ſhould be this? Lo, here I have given thee (with *Iſhmael*) the fatneſs of the earth: Thou ſhalt not ſay, but thou haſt taſted of thy Creator's bounty; but make the moſt of it, for this is all that ever thou ſhalt have from me: There be others in the world, to whom I have denyed theſe things, but for them I have reſerved better; for the moſt part they are poor in this world, but rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom? Is not this enough to damp all my carnal mirth? Should my conſcience give me ſuch a *memento*, as *Abraham* in the parable gave to *Dives*; *Remember that thou in thy life time receivedſt thy good things*. Ah, what a cut would that be to all my comforts? A man in a Fever hath a lively colour, but a dying heart. I have an appearance, a ſhadow of comfort, but a ſad ſtate of ſoul.

2. A Reflection for one that hath Chriſt but no Barn.

Bleſſed be the God and father of my Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed me with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt, *Eph.* 1.3. Though he hath not ſeen fit to give me much of this world in hand, yet it hath pleaſed him to ſettle a rich inhe-

inheritance upon me by promise; the hopes and expectations whereof, yield my soul more true comfort than all the present enjoyments of this world could have done. Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given me my portion in this life, that by keeping me from the *enjoyment*, hath also preserved me from the *snares* of a prosperous estate.

Lord Jesus, I have no bags, I have no Barns; but thou shalt be to me instead of all those things. When others rejoyce in the fulness of their earthly comforts, I will rejoyce in the fulness of my Christ; they have that which (though I have not) I shall not want; and I have that which all their riches cannot purchase. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

3. A Reflection for one that hath a full Barn and Christ too.

But Lord, how am I obliged, above thousands, to love and praise thee! to bless and admire thee, who hast not only plentifully provided for my soul, but for my body too! who hast given me both the upper and the neather springs, heaven and earth, things present, and things to come: Thou hast not dealt so with all, no, not with all thine own people; many of them are strangers to the mercies which I enjoy. God hath done great things for me; O my soul! what wilt thou do for God? The freer the condition is, he hath placed me in, the more am I both obliged and advantaged for his service; and yet I doubt it will be found, that many a poor Christian that labours with his hands to get his bread, redeems more hours for God than I do. Lord, make me wise to understand, and answer the double end of this gracious dispensation! Let me bestow the more of my time on God, and stand ready to Minister to the necessities of his people.

4. A Reflection for one that hath neither a Barn, nor a Christ.

Oh, what an unhappy wretch am I! that have nothing either in hand, or in hope; am miserable here, and like to be so for ever: Had I but an interest in Christ, as the godly poor have, that would sweeten all present troubles, and shew me the end of them. But alas! I am poor and wicked, contemned of men, and abhorred of God; an object of contempt, both to heaven and earth. Lord, look upon such a truly miserable object with compassion, give me a portion with thy people in the world to come, if thou never better

my

my outward condition here! O ſanctifie this poverty! bleſs theſe ſtraits and wants, that they may neceſſitate my ſoul to go to Chriſt; make this poverty the way to glory, and I ſhall bleſs thee to eternity, that I was poor in this world.

The *Poem*.

OFt have I ſeen when harveſt's almoſt in,
The laſt load coming; how ſome men have bin
Rapt up with joy, as if that welcom cart
(1) Iſa. 9. 3. Drew home the very (1) treaſure of their heart.
What joyful ſhoutings! hooping! hollowing noiſe,
With mingled voices both of men and boyes?
(2) Pſal. 4. 7. To carnal minds there is no (2) greater mirth,
No higher joy; nor greater heaven on earth.
He ſpeaks pure Paradoxes, that ſhall ſay
Theſe are but trifles; to what Saints enjoy.
(3) Prov. 29. 27 But they (3) deſpiſe your ſparks, as much as you
Contemn their Sun. Some that could never ſhew
(4) Luke 16. 20, 21. A full ſtuft (4) Barn, on which you ſet yourt hear;
But glean perhaps the ears behind your cart;
Yet are the gleanings of their comfort more,
Than all your harveſt, and admired ſtore.
(5) Job 20. 23 Your mirth is (5) mixt with ſorrow, theirs is pure
(6) Job 20. 5. Yours like a ſhadow (6) fleets, but theirs indure.
(7) Prov. 10. 22 God gives to you the huſk, to them the pith;
And no heart-ſtring ſorrow (7) adds therewith.
Though at the gates of death they ſometimes mourn,
No ſooner doth the Lord to them return;
But ſorrow's baniſht from their penſive breaſt;
(8) Pſal. 42. 11. Joy triumphs there, and (8) ſmiles their cheeks inveſt.
Have you beheld when with perfumed wings,
Out of the balmy Eaſt bright *Phœbus* ſprings;
Mounting th'*Olympick* hill, with what a grace
He views the throne of darkneſs; and doth chaſe

The

The ſhades of night before him? having hurl'd
His golden beams about this lower world,
How from ſad Groves, and ſolitary Cells
Where horrid darkneſs and confuſion dwells,
Batts, Owles, and doleful creatures fly away,
Reſigning to the cheerful birds of day,
Who in thoſe places now can ſit and chaunt,
Where lately ſuch ſad creatures kept their haunt.
Thus grief reſigns to joy, ſighs, groans and tears,
To ſongs triumphant when the Lord appears.
O matchleſs joy! O countenance divine!
What are thoſe trifles, to theſe ſmiles of thine!
May I with poor *Mephiboſheth* be bleſt
With theſe ſweet ſmiles, let *Ziba* take the reſt.
My life, my treaſure, thou ſhalt ne'r be ſold
For ſilver hills, or rivers pav'd with gold.
Wer't thou but known to worldlings, they would ſcorn,
To ſtoop their hearts to ſuch poor things as corn.
For ſo they do, becauſe thou art above
That ſphere wherein their low conceptions move.

CHAP. XIX.

More ſolid grain with greater ſtrength you thraſh,
The ableſt Chriſtians have the hardeſt laſh.

Upon the' thraſhing out of Corn.

OBSERVATION.

HUsbandmen having to do with divers ſorts of grain ſome more tough and ſtubborn; others more free and tender, do not beat all alike in the threſhing floor; but as they have threſhals of ſeveral ſizes, ſo they beſtow on ſome grain more, on other fewer ſtrokes, according to the diffe-rent qualities of the grain to be threſhed. This obſervation the

the Prophet *Iſaiah* hath, *Chap.* 28. v. 27. *The Fitches are not threſhed with a threſhing inſtrument, neither is the Cart-wheel turn'd about upon the Cummin, but the Fitches are beaten out with a ſtaff, and the Cummin with a rod.* The manner of beating out the corn in ancient times, was far different from that which is now in uſe among us; they had the Cart-wheel, which was full of iron ſpokes or teeth, and the hoofs of beaſts for the harder ſort of grain, as Wheat, Rye and Barley, a ſtaff or flail for the Fitches, and a rod or twig for the Cummin; all which inſtruments were proportioned according to the nature of the grain.

APPLICATION.

GOd having to do in a way of correction with divers ſorts of offenders, doth not uſe the like ſeverity with them all, but proportions his correction to their abilities and ſtrength, *Jer.* 30. 11. I will not make a full end of thee, but will [correct thee in meaſure] and will not leave thee altogether unpuniſhed, *(q.d.)* afflicted thou muſt be, my reſpect to my own glory and thy good, puts a neceſſity upon that; but yet I will do it moderately, I will not lay on without meaſure or mercy, as I intend to do upon the enemies; but will mete out your ſufferings in a due proportion, even as a careful Phyſician in preſcribing pills or potions to his Patients, hath regard as well to the ability of the Patient as to the nature and quality of the diſeaſe; even ſo thy God, O *Iſrael*, will not afflict thee according to the greatneſs of his power and his wrath; anſwerable thereunto, *Pſal.* 90. 11. that would break thee to pieces, *Pſal.* 78. 38. Nor yet will he afflict thee according to the demerit of thy ſin. As it ſhall be much leſs than what I could inflict; ſo it ſhall be leſs than thine iniquities deſerve, *Ezra* 9. 13. Neither my power, nor thy deſert, ſhall be the rule of my proceedings; but I will do it with moderation and mercy, as thou art able to bear. I that have inſtructed the Husbandman to proportion his inſtruments to the quality of the grain before him, will exerciſe the like wiſdom and mildneſs towards the

thee.

thee, and the ſimilitude betwixt the Husbandmans threſhing his corn, and the Lords afflicting his people, ſtands in theſe particulars.

The Husbandmans end in threſhing the corn, is to ſeparate it from the husks and chaff; and God's end in afflicting his people, is to ſeparate them from their ſins, *Iſa.* 27. 9. In meaſure when it ſhooteth forth, he will debate with it, (*i.e.*) he will moderately correct them; and what the end of thoſe corrections are, the next words inform us; *By this therefore ſhall the iniquity of* Jacob *be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his ſin.* God uſes afflictions, as we uſe ſope, to cleanſe away filthineſs, and fetch out ſpots, *Dan.* 11. 35. he aimes not at the deſtruction of their perſons, but of their luſts. 1.

If the Husbandman have cockle, darnel, or pernicious tares before him in the floor among his corn, he little regards whether it be bruiſed and battered to pieces by the threſhold or no; 'tis a worthleſs thing, and he ſpares it not. Such cockle and tares are the enemies of God; and when theſe come under his flail, he ſtrikes them without mercy; for theſe, the Lord prepares a new ſharp threſhing inſtrument having teeth, which ſhall beat them to duſt, *Iſa* 41. 15. *The daughter of* Babylon *is like a threſhing floor; 'tis time to threſh her,* Jer. 51. 33. And when that time is come, then (in alluſion to the beaſt, that was to tread out the corn) *Sion's horn ſhall be of iron, and her hoofs braſs,* Mich. 4. 13. He ſmites not his people, according to the ſtroke of them that ſmote them; the meaning is, his ſtrokes on them ſhall be deadly ſtrokes. They ſhewed no mercy to *Sion*, and God will ſhew no mercy to them. 2.

When the husks and chaff are perfectly ſeparated from the grain, then the Husbandman beats it no more. When God hath perfectly purged and ſeparated the ſins of his people, then afflictions ſhall come to a perpetual end, he will never ſmite them again; there is no noiſe of the threſhing inſtrument in heaven; he that beat them with his flail on earth, will put them into his boſom in heaven. 3.

Though the Husbandman layes on, and beates his corn, as 4.

if he were angry with it, yet he loves and highly prizes it, and though God ſtrike and afflict his people, yet he ſets a great value upon them? and it is equally abſurd to infer God's hatred to his people from his afflicting of them, as the Husbandmans hatred of his corn, becauſe he threſhes and beats it, *Heb.* 12. 6. *Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, and chaſteneth every ſon whom he receiveth.*

5. Though the Husbandman threſh and beat the corn, yet he will not bruiſe or hurt it if he can help it; though ſome require more and harder ſtrokes than others, yet none ſhall have more than it can endure. And though the Lord afflict his ſervants, yet he will do them no hurt, *Jer.* 25. 6. Some need more rods than others, but none ſhall have more than they can bear; the Lord knows the meaſures and degrees of his ſervants faith and patience, and accordingly ſhall their tryals be, *Pſal.* 103. 13, 14. *Like as a father pities his children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for he knows their frame, he remembers they are but duſt; he makes a way to eſcape, that they may be able to bear it,* 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. This care and tenderneſs of God over his afflicted, is eminently diſcovered in three particulars.

(1) In not expoſing them to, till he have prepared them for their tryals, *Luke* 24. 49. *Tarry ye at* Jeruſalem *until ye be endued with power from on High.* He gives them ſometimes eminent diſcoveries of his love immediately before, and as a preparative to their ſufferings; in the ſtrength whereof, they are carried through all.

(2) Or if not ſo, then he intermixeth ſupporting comfort with their troubles, as you ſometimes ſee the Sun ſhine out while the rain falls. 'Twas ſo with *Paul*, *Act.* 27. 23. *This night* (and it was a ſad night indeed) *there ſtood by me the Angel of the Lord, whoſe I am.*

3. In taking off the affliction, when they can bear it no longer, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *He makes a way to eſcape, that they may be able to bear it.* Pſal. 125. 3. The rod is taken off, *when the righteous is even ready to put forth his hand to iniquity.* 'Tis a Jewiſh Proverb, When the bricks are doubled, then comes *Moſes.* And it is a Chriſtian experience, When the ſpirit is ready

ready to fail, then comes Jeſus; according to that promiſe *Iſa.* 57. 16.

REFLECTIONS.

HOw unlike am I to God, in the afflicting of his people? The Lord is pitiful when he ſmites them, but I have been cruel. He is kind to them, when moſt ſevere; but the beſt of my kindneſſes to them, may fitly enough be called ſeverity. God ſmites them in love, I have ſmitten them in hatred. Ah, what have I done? God hath uſed me as his hand, *Pſal.* 17. 14. or as his rod to afflict them, *Jer.* 10. 7. but his end and mine have widely differed in that action, *Iſa.* 10. 7. I am but the Scullion, or rather the wiſp to Scour and cleanſe theſe veſſels of glory, and when I have done that dirty work, thoſe bright ſouls ſhall be ſet up in heaven, and I caſt into the fire. If he ſhall have judgment without Mercy, that ſhewed no mercy; how can I expect mercy from the Lord, whoſe people I have perſecuted mercileſly for his ſake? 1. A reflection for perſecutors

Is the Lord's Wheat thus threſhed in the floor of affliction? What then ſhall I think of my condition, who proſper and am let alone in the way of ſin? ſurely the Lord looks on me as on a weed, and not as his corn; and 'tis too probable that I am rather reſerved for burning, than threſhing. Some there are whom God loves not ſo well as to ſpend a rod upon them, but ſaith, *Let them alone*, Hoſ. 4. 17. but miſerable is their condition; notwithſtanding their impunity; for what is the interpretation but this? I will come to a reckoning with them for altogether in hell. Lord, how much better is thy afflicting mercy, than thy ſparing ſeverity! Better is the condition of an afflicted child, than of a rejected baſtard. *Heb.* 12. 7. O, let me rather feel thy rod now, as the rod of a loving father, than feel thy wrath hereafter, as the wrath of an omnipotent avenger. 2. A reflection for ſuch as meet with no afflictions.

Well then, deſpond not, O my ſoul, thou heareſt the Husbandman loves his corn though he threſheth it: and ſurely the Lord loves thee not the leſs, becauſe he afflicts thee ſo much. 3. A Reflection for an afflicted Saint.

much. If affliction then be the way to heaven, bleſſed be God for affliction. The threſhing ſtrokes of God have come thick upon me, by which I may ſee, what a tough and ſtubborn heart I have; if one ſtroke would have done the work, he would not have lifted up his hand the ſecond time. I have not had a ſtroke more than I had need of, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. and by this means he will purge my ſin, bleſſed be God for that. The damned have infinitely more and harder ſtrokes than I, and yet their ſin ſhall never be ſeparated by their ſufferings. Ah, ſin, curſed ſin, I am ſo much out of love with thee, that I am willing to endure more than all this to be well rid of thee; all this I ſuffer for thy ſake, but the time is coming when I ſhall be rid of ſin and ſuffering together. Mean while I am under my own fathers hand, ſmite me he may, but hate me he cannot.

The *Poem*.

THe ſacred records tell us, heretofore
God had an Alter in a (1) threſhing floor;
Where threſhing inſtruments devoted were
To ſacred ſervice, ſo you find them here.
I now would teach the threſher to beat forth,
A notion from his threſhold much more worth
Than all his corn; and make him underſtand
That ſoul-inſtructing engine in his hand.
With fewer (2) ſtrokes, and lighter you will beat
The Oats and Barley? than the ſtubborn wheat,
Which will require and endure more blows,
Than freer grain. Thus deals (3) the Lord by thoſe
Whom he afflicts. He doth not uſe to ſtrike
Offending children, with his rod alike.
But on the (4) ableſt ſhoulders doth impoſe,
The heavieſt burdens; and the (5) leſs on thoſe

(1) 2 Sam. 24. 22.
(2) Iſa. 28. 27.
(3) Iſa. 27. 7, 8.
(4) Joh. 1. 1. 12.
(5) Jer. 30. 11.

Of

Of weaker grace. He ſhews himſelf a God
Of judgment, in his handling of the rod.
God hath a (6) rate-book by him, wherein he
Keeps juſt accounts, how rich his peop'le be;
What faith, experience, patience more or leſs
Each one poſſeſſeth, and doth them aſſeſs
According to their ſtock. Such as have not
A Martyrs *faith*, ſhall have no Martyrs *lot*.
The (7) kinds, degrees, and the continuance
Of all their ſufferings, to a circumſtance;
Preſcribed are by him who wiſely ſwayes
The world, (8) more than's right on no man layes.
Be man or devil the apothecary,
God's the Phyſician; who can then miſcarry
In ſuch a hand? he never did, or will
Suffer the leaſt addition to his bill.
Nor meaſure, nor yet mercy he obſerves
In threſhing (9) *Babilon*, for ſhe deſerves
His heavieſt ſtrokes; and in his floor ſhe muſt
Be beaten ſhortly with his flail to duſt.
But *Sion's* God (1) in meaſure will debate,
his children he may ſmite; but cannot hate.
He beats them, true, to make their chaff to flye;
That they like purged golden graines may lye
In one fair heap, with thoſe bleſs'd ſouls that here
Once in like manner thraſh'd, and winnowed were.

(6) Rev. 3 8.

(7) Rev. 2. 10.

(8) Job 34. 23.

(9) Iſa. 41. 15.

(1) Iſa. 27. 7.

CHAP. XX.

The fan doth cauſe light chaff to fly away,
So ſhall th'ungodly, in Gods winnowing day.

Upon the winnowing of corn.

OBSERVATION.

WHen the Corn is threſhed out in the floor, where it lyes mingled with empty ears, and worthleſs

worthleſs chaff, the husbandman carries it out altogether into ſome open place, where having ſpread his ſheet for the preſervation of the grain, he expoſes it all to the wind; the good grain, by reaſon of its ſolidity, remains upon the ſheet, but the chaff being light and empty, is partly carried quite away by the wind, and all the reſt ſeparated from the good grain into a diſtinct heap; which is carried away, either to the fire or the dunghil, as a worthleſs thing.

APPLICATION.

MEn have their winnowing dayes, and God hath his; a day to ſeparate the chaff from the wheat, the godly from the ungodly, who ſhall both be held up to the wind, but only the wicked ſhall be driven away by it. Such a day God hath in this world, wherein he winnows his wheat, and ſeparates the chaff. There is a double fanning or winnowing of men here in this world; one is *doctrinally*, in which ſenſe I underſtand that Scripture, *Mat.* 3. 12. ſpoken of Chriſt, when he was entring into his Miniſterial work, *His fan is in his hand, and he ſhall throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.* The preaching of the Goſpel is as a fan in Chriſts hand, and it is as much as if *John* had thus told the *Jews*, that though there were many hypocrytical ones among them, that had now a place and name among the people of God, and gloried in their Church-priviledges, yet there is a purging blaſt of truth coming, which ſhall make them fly out of the Church, as faſt as chaff out of the floor. Thus Chriſt winnows or fans the world doctrinally: The other is *judicially*, by bringing ſore and grievous tryals and ſufferings upon the Churches, for this very end, that thoſe which are but chaff, (*i. e.*) empty and vain Profeſſors may by ſuch winds as theſe, be ſeparated from his people.

The Church increaſes two wayes, and by two divers means *extenſively*, in breadth and numbers, and *intenſively*, in vigour and power; peace and proſperity cauſes the firſt, ſufferings and adverſity the laſt; and well may a day of perſecution

ſecution be called a winnowing day, for then were the people of God toſſed to purpoſe, as corn in the ſieve, though nothing but chaff be loſt thereby. Of ſuch a winnowing day the Prophet ſpeaks, *Amos* 9. 9, 10. *I will ſift the houſe of* Iſrael *among all Nations, like as corn is ſifted in a ſieve, yet ſhall not the leaſt grain fall upon the earth, all the ſinners of my people ſhall die.* (*q. d.*) I will cauſe great agitations and toſſings among you by the hands of the *Aſſyrians* and *Babylonians*, into whoſe Countryes you ſhall be diſperſt and ſcattered, yet I will ſo govern thoſe your diſperſions by my providence, that not one good grain, one upright ſoul ſhall eternally periſh; but the ſinners of my people, the refuſe ſtuff, that ſhall periſh.

To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks another Prophet, *Zeph.* 1.1,2. *Gather your ſelves together*, (or as ſome read) *fan your ſelves*, yea, fan your ſelves, *before the decree bring forth, and the day paſs as the chaff.* He doth not mean, that the time ſhall paſs as the chaff, but there is a day of affliction and diſtreſs coming in which the wicked ſhall paſs as the chaff before the wind; and yet notwithſtanding, all theſe winnowings upon earth, much chaff will ſtill abide among the corn; therefore God hath appointed another day for the winnownig of the world, even the day of judgment, in reference to which it is ſaid, *Pſal.* 1. 4, 5. *The ungodly are not ſo, but are like the chaff which the wind drives away; therefore the ungodly ſhall not ſtand in judgment, nor ſinners in the congregation of the righteous;* (*i. e.*) God hath a day wherein he will ſift the world, like corn in a ſieve, and then the wicked ſhall appear to be but chaff, which God will eternally ſeparate from his wheat. I will not ſtrain the ſimilitude, but fairly diſplay it in theſe ſeven particulars.

1. The chaff and wheat grow together in the ſame field, and upon the ſame root and ſtalk. In this, wicked men are like chaff, who not only aſſociate with the people of God, but oftentimes ſpring up with them in the ſame families, and from the ſame root, or immediate Parents, *Mal.* 1. 2. *was not Eſau, Jacobs brother*; yet the one was wheat, the other chaff. Inſtances of this are infinite.

The

2. The Husbandman would never endure the husks, chaff, and dry ſtalks to remain in the field, if it were not for the good corns ſake; he would quickly ſet fire on it, but that the corn is among it, which he highly prizeth; and be aſſured, God would never ſuffer the wicked to abide long in this world were it not for his own elect that were diſperſed among them. Except the Lord had ſuch a remnant diſperſed in the world, he would quickly ſet fire to the four quarters, and make it like *Sodom*, *Iſa.* 1. 9.

3. The chaff is a very worthleſs thing, the Husbandman cares not what becomes of it, and of as little worth are wicked men, *Prov.* 10. 20. *The heart of the wicked is little worth.* The heart is the principal part of the man, and yet that's but chaff, no worth in it; his lands, his cloaths, &c. are worth ſomewhat, but his heart is worth nothing.

4. Though chaff in it ſelf be nothing worth, yet, it is of ſome uſe to the corn whiles 'tis ſtanding in the field; the ſtalk bears up the ear, and the chaff covers the grain, and defends it from the injury of the weather. Thus God makes wicked men of uſe to his people, in outward ſociety; they help to ſupport and protect them in this world, *Rev.* 12. 16. The earth helped the woman, (*i. e.*) worldly men for carnal ends helpt the Church, when a flood of perſecution was poured out. The Church often helps the world, it receives many benefits from the people of God; and ſometimes God overrules the world to help his Church.

5. When the chaff and wheat are both brought forth and held up to the wind in one ſieve, they fall two wayes; the wheat falls down upon the floor or ſheet, the chaff is carried quite away: So although for a time godly and ungodly abide together, yet when this winnowing time comes, Gods wheat ſhall be gathered into his garner in heaven, the chaff ſhall go the other way, *Mat.* 3. 12.

6. If there be any chaff among the corn, it will appear when it is ſifted in a windy day, it cannot poſſibly eſcape if it be well winnowed; much more impoſſible it is for any wicked man to eſcape the critical ſearch of God in that day? the cloſeſt hypocrite ſhall then be detected, for God will judge

judge the ſecrets of men, 2 *Cor.* 16. *He will then bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and make manifeſt the counſels of the heart*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 5.

Laſtly, after corn and chaff are ſeparated by the winnowing wind, they ſhall never lye together in one heap any more. The wicked ſhall ſee *Abraham*, and *Iſaac*, and *Jacob* and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, but themſelves thruſt out; there is no chaff in heaven. 7.

REFLECTIONS.

AM I an empty vain Profeſſor, that want the pith and ſubſtance of real godlineſs; then am I but chaff in Gods account, though I grow among his corn; the eye of man cannot diſcern my hypocriſie, but when he comes, whoſe fan is in his hand, then how plainly will it be detected? Angels and men ſhall diſcern it, and ſay, *Lo, this is the man that made not God his hope*; how ſhall I abide the day of his coming? Chriſt is the great heart-Anatomiſt; things ſhall not be carried then, by names and parties, as they are now; every one ſhall be weighed in a juſt balance, and a *Mene Tekel*, written upon every falſe heart; great will be the perſpicuity of that trial, my own conſcience ſhall joyn with my Judg, and ſhall then acknowledg, that there is not one drop of injuſtice in all that Sea of wrath; and though I am damned, yet I am not wronged; the chaff cannot ſtand before the wind, nor I before the judgment of Chriſt. 1. A Reflection for a cloſe Hypocrite.

Is there ſuch a fanning time coming; why do not I then ſift my heart every day, by ſerious ſelf-examination? no work more important to me, and yet how much have I neglected it? O my ſoul! thou hadſt been better imployed, in ſearching thine own eſtate in reference to that day, than in prying ſinfully into the hearts, and cenſuring the conditions of other men; judge thy ſelf, and thou ſhalt not be condemned with the world; the work indeed is difficult, but the neglect dangerous: were I within a few dayes to ſtand at mans bar, there to be tryed for my life, how buſie ſhould I be every hour of the day in writing to any that I thought could befriend 2. A Reflection for one that neglects ſelf-examination.

befriend me? and ſtudying every advantatage to my ſelf? and yet, what a vaſt difference is there between mans bar and Gods? between a tryal for my life, and for my ſoul? Lord, rouze up my ſluggiſh heart by awful and ſolicitous thoughts of that day, leſt I be found among that chaff, which ſhall be burnt up with unquenchable fire!

3. A Reflection for a ſincere ſoul.

Fear not, O my ſoul! though there be a blaſt coming which ſhall drive all the chaff into hell, yet it ſhall blow thee no harm. *I know that when he hath tryed me, I ſhall come forth as gold*, Job 23. 10. I confeſs I have too much chaff about me, but yet I am not altogether chaff? there is a ſolid work of grace upon my ſoul, that will abide the tryal: let the judgement to come be as impartial and exact as its poſſible to be, yet a grain of ſincerity cannot be loſt in it; for *God will not caſt away a perfect* (i. e.) an upright hearted) *man*, Job 8. 20. He that's appointed to judge the world is mine; and his imputed righteouſneſs will make me full weight in the balance. Bleſs the Lord (O my ſoul) for ſincerity; this will abide, when common gifts and empty names will flee as the chaff before the wind.

The *Poem*.

(1) Pſal. 35. 5.

THe winnowing wind firſt (1) drives the chaff away,
Next light, and hollow grains; thoſe only ſtay
Whoſe weight, and ſolid ſubſtance can endure
This tryal, and ſuch grains are counted pure.
(2) Mat. 3. 12. The corn for uſe (2) is carefully preſerv'd,
(3) Mat. 3. 12 The uſeleſs chaff (3) for burning flames reſerv'd.
No wind but blows ſome good, a Proverb is;
Glad ſhall I be, if it hold true in this.
O, that the wind when you to winnowing go,
This ſpiritual good unto your ſouls might blow!
To make you pauſe, and ſadly ruminate
In what a doleful plight and wretched ſtate

Their

Their ſouls are in, who cannot (4) hope to ſtand
When he ſhall come, whoſe (5) fan is in his hand.
His (6) piercing eyes infallibly diſcloſe,
The very reins, and (7) inward parts of thoſe
Whoſe outſide ſeeming grace ſo neatly paints,
That with the (8) beſt, they paſs for real Saints.
No hypocrite with God (9) acceptance finds,
But like the chaff diſpers'd by furious winds:
Their guilt ſhall not that ſearching day endure,
Nor they approach (1) th'aſſemblies of the pure.
Have you obſerv'd in Autumn, (2) thiſtle-down
By howling *Eurus* ſcatter'd up and down
About the fields? even ſo Gods ireful ſtorm
Shall chace the hypocrite, who now can ſcorn
The breath of cloſe reproofs; and like a rock
Repel reproofs, and juſt reprovers mock.
How many that in (3) ſplendid garments walk
Of high profeſſions! and like Angels talk,
Shall God deveſt; and openly proclaim
Their ſecret guilt, to their eternal ſhame!
This is the day, wherein the Lord will rid
His Church of thoſe falſe friends, which now lie hid.
Among his people. There will not be one
Falſe heart remain, to loſe our love upon.
O, bleſs'd aſſembly! glorious ſtate! when all
In their uprightneſs walk, and ever ſhall.
O make my heart ſincere, that I may never
Prove ſuch light chaff as then thy wind will ſever.
From ſolid grain! O let my ſoul deteſt
Unſoundneſs? and abide thy ſtricteſt teſt.

(4) Pſal. 1. 5.
(5) Mat. 3.12.
(6) Rev. 1. 14.
(7) 1 Cor. 4.5.
(8) Mat. 7.22.
(9) Job 13.16.
(1) Pſal. 1. 5.
(2) Iſa. 17.13.
(3) Mat. 25. 7.

An Introduction

TO THE

Second PART

OF

HUSBANDRY.

HOw is it reader? have I tired thee? (with me.
Whilſt through theſe pleaſant fields thou walk'ſt
Our path was pleaſant, but if length of way
Do weary thee, we'l ſlack our pace, and ſtay;
Let's ſit a while under the cooling Shade
Of fragrant trees; trees were for ſhadow made.
Lo here a pleaſant grove, whoſe ſhade is good;
But more than ſo, 'twill yield us fruit for food.
No dangerous fruits do on theſe branches grow,
No ſnakes among the verdant graſs below.
Here we'l repoſe a while, and then go view
The pleaſant herds and flocks: and ſo adieu.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Upon the ingraffing of fruit Trees.

Ungraffed Trees can never bear good fruit,
Nor we till graffed on a better root.

OBSERVATION.

A Wild tree naturally ſpringing up in the wood or hedge, and never graffed or removed from its native ſoyl, may bear ſome fruit, and that fair and beautiful to the eye, but it will give you no content at all in eating, being alwayes harſh, ſower and unpleaſant to the taſte; but if ſuch a ſtock be removed into a good ſoyl, and graffed with a better kind, it may become a good tree, and yield ſtore of choice and pleaſant fruit.

APPLICATION.

UNregenerate men who never were acquainted with the myſtery of ſpiritual union with Jeſus Chriſt, but ſtill grow upon their natural root, old *Adam*, may by the force and power of natural principles bring forth ſome fruit, (which like the wild hedge fruit we ſpeak of) may indeed be fair and pleaſant to the eyes of men, but God takes no pleaſure at all in it; its ſower, harſh, and diſtaſteful to him, becauſe it ſprings not from the ſpirit of Chriſt, *Iſa.* 1. 13. *I cannot away with it, it is iniquity*, &c. but that I may not intangle the thred of my diſcourſe, I ſhall (as in the former Chapters) ſet before you a paralel betwixt the beſt fruits of natural men, and thoſe of a wild ungraffed tree.

1. The root that bears this wild fruit is a degenerate root, and that's the cauſe of all this ſowerneſs and harſhneſs in the fruit it bears; it's the ſeed of ſome better Tree accidentally blown, or caſt into ſome waſte and bad ſoyl, where not being manured

manured and ordered aright, it's turned wild: So all the fruits of unregenerate men flow from the firſt *Adam*, a corrupt and degenerate root; he was indeed planted a right ſeed, but ſoon turned a wild and degenerate plant; he being the root from which every man naturally ſprings, corrupts all the fruit that any man bears from him. It's obſerved by *Gregory*, pertinent to my preſent purpoſe, *Genus humanum in parente primo, velut in radice putruit*; Mankind was putrified in the root of his firſt parent, *Matt.* 7. 18. *A Corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit.*

This corrupt root ſpoyls the fruit, by the tranſmiſſion of its ſower and naughty ſap into all the branches and fruits that grow on them; they ſuck no other nouriſhment, but what the root affords them, and that being bad, ſpoyles all: for the ſame cauſe and reaſon, no meer natural or unregenerate man can ever do one holy or acceptable action, becauſe the corruption of the root is in all thoſe actions. The neceſſity of our drawing corruption into all our actions, from this curſed root *Adam*, is expreſſed by a quick and ſmart Interrogation, *Job* 14. 4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.* The ſenſe of it is well delivered us (by Mr. *Caryl in loc.*) This queſtion (ſaith he) may undergo a threefold conſtruction; Firſt, thus: Who can bring a morally clean perſon, out of a perſon originally unclean? and ſo he layes his hand upon his birth-ſin: Or, ſecondly, (which ſpeaks to my purpoſe) it may refer to the action of the ſame man, man being unclean, cannot bring forth a clean thing; (*i. e.*) a clean or holy action; that which is originated, is like its Original. And that this ſower ſap of the firſt ſtock (I mean *Adams* ſin) is tranſmitted into all mankind, not only corrupting their fruit, but ruining and withering all the branches; the *Apoſtle* ſhews us in that excellent parallell betwixt the two *Adams*, Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man* one, not only *in individuo, ſed in ſpecie*, one repreſenting the whole root or ſtock, *ſin entered into the world* not by imitation only, but by propagation? and this brought death and ruine upon all the branches. 2.

Although theſe wild hedge-fruits be unwholſom and unpleaſant 3.

pleaſant to the taſte, yet they are fair and beautiful to the eye; a man that looks upon them, and doth not know what fruit it is, would judge it by its ſhew and colour to be excellent fruit; for it makes a fairer ſhew oftentimes, than the beſt and moſt wholſome fruit doth: Even ſo, thoſe natural gifts and endowments which ſome unregenerate perſons have, ſeem exceeding fair to the eye, and a fruit to be deſired. What excellent qualities have ſome meer natural men and women? what a winning affability? humble condeſcention, meekneſs, righteouſneſs, ingenious tenderneſs and ſweetneſs of nature! As it was (hyperbolically enough) ſaid of one, *In hoc homine, non peccavit Adam*; *Adam* never ſinned in this man; meaning, that he excelled the generality of *Adams* children in ſweetneſs of temper and natural endowments. What curious phantaſies, nimble wits, ſolid judgments, tenacious memories, rare elocution, &c. are to be found among meer natural men? by which they are aſſiſted in diſcourſing, praying, preaching and writing, to the admiration of ſuch as know them! But that which is highly eſteemed of men, is abomination to God, *Luke* 16. 15. it finds no acceptance with him, becauſe it ſprings from that curſed root of nature and is not the production of his own ſpirit.

4. If ſuch a ſtock were removed into a better ſoyl, and graffed with a better kind, it might bring forth fruit pleaſant and grateful to the Husbandman; and if ſuch perſons (before deſcribed) were but regenerated and changed in their ſpirits and principles, what excellent and uſeful perſons would they be in the Church of God? and then their fruits would be ſweet and acceptable to him. One obſerves of *Tertullian*, *Origen*, and *Jerome*, that they came into *Canaan*, laden with *Egyptian* gold, (*i. e.*) they came into the Church full of excellent humane learning, which did Chriſt much ſervice.

5. When the Husbandman cuts down his woods or hedges, he cuts down theſe Crab-ſtocks with the reſt, becauſe he values them not any more than the thorns and brambles among which they grow; and as little will God regard or ſpare theſe natural branches, how much ſoever they are laden with ſuch fruit. The threatning is univerſal, *John* 3. 3. *Except you be*

be regenerate and born again, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again, *Heb.* 12. 14. *Without holineſs, no man* (be his natural gifts never ſo excellent) *ſhall ſee God.* Imbelliſhed nature, is nature ſtill; *That which is born of the fleſh, is but fleſh,* however it be ſet off with advantage to the eye of man.

REFLECTIONS.

1. A Reflection for an accompliſhed Naturaliſt.

TO what purpoſe then do I glory in my natural accompliſhments? Though I have a better nature than ſome others have, yet it is a curſed nature ſtill. Theſe ſweet qualities and excellent gifts, do only hide, but not kill the corruption of nature. I am but a rotten poſt gilded over, and all my duties but hedge fruit, which God makes no account of. O cutting thought! that the unlearned ſhall riſe and take heaven, when I with all my excellent gifts ſhall deſcend into hell. Heaven was not made for Scholars, as ſuch, but for believers; as one ſaid, when they comforted him upon his death-bed, that he was a knowing man, a *Doctor of Divinity*: O, ſaid he, I ſhall not appear before God as a *Doctor*, but as a man; I ſhall ſtand upon a level with the moſt illiterate, in the day of judgment; what doth it avail me that I have a nimble wit, whilſt I have none to do my ſelf good? Will my Judge be charm'd with a rhetorical tongue? Things will not be carried in that world, as they are in this. If I could with *Berengarius* diſcourſe *de omni ſcibile*, of every thing that is knowable; or with *Solomon* unravel nature, from the *Cedar* to the *Hyſop*, what would this advantage me, as long as I am ignorant of *Chriſt*, and the myſtery of Regeneration? My head hath often aked with ſtudy, but when did my heart ake for ſin? Methinks, O my ſoul, thou trimmeſt up thy ſelf in theſe natural ornaments to appear before God, much as that delicate *Agag* did, when he was to come before *Samuel*, and fondly conceiteſt that theſe things will procure favour, or (at leaſt) pity from him? but yet, think not for all that, *the bitterneſs of death is paſt*; ſay not within thy ſelf, Will God caſt ſuch a one as I into hell? Shall a man of ſuch

parts be damned? Alas! juſtice will hew thee to pieces, as *Samuel* did that ſpruce King, and not abate thee the leaſt, for theſe things; many thouſand branches of nature, as fair and fruitful as thy ſelf, are now blazing in hell, becauſe not tranſplanted by regeneration into *Chriſt*; and if he ſpared not them, neither will he ſpare thee.

2. A reflection for a true, but weak believer.

I am a poor deſpiſed Shrub, which have no beauty at all in me, and yet ſuch a one hath the Lord choſen to tranſplant into *Chriſt*, whilſt he left many fragrant branches ſtanding on their native ſtock, to be fuel of his wrath to all eternity! O grace for ever to be admired! Ah, what cauſe have I to be thankful to free grace, and for ever to walk humbly with my God: the Lord hath therefore choſen an unlikely, rugged, unpoliſht creature as I am, that pride may for ever be hid from mine eyes, and that I may never glory in his preſence, 1 *Cor.* 1. 29. I now have the advantage of a better root and ſoyl than any carnal perſon hath, it will therefore be a greater ſhame to me, and a reproach to the root that bears me, if I ſhould be out-ſtript and excelled by them; yet Lord, how often do I find it ſo? I ſee ſome of them meek and patient, whilſt I am proud and paſſionate; gentle and affable, whilſt I am rough and ſurly; generous and noble, whilſt I am baſe and penurious. Truly, ſuch a branch as I am, is no honour to the root that bears it.

The *Poem.*

I Am a branch of that fair *Eden* Tree
Which to (1) mankind God had ordain'd to be
The common ſtock, his (2) ſcituation good,
His (3) branches many, of himſelf a wood.
And like a Cedar by the River fed,
Unto the clouds his ample branches ſpread.
Sin ſmote (4) his root, then juſtice cut him down;
And level'd with the earth his lofty Crown.

(1) 1 Cor. 10. 45.
(2) Eccl. 7. 9.
(3) Deut. 32. 8.
(4) Rom. 5. 12.

What

What hope of branches, when the (5) tree's o'return'd ?
But like (6) dry faggots to be bound and burn'd.
It had been so, had not (7) transcendent love,
Which in a sphear above our thoughts doth move
Prepar'd a better (8) stock, to save and nourish
Transplanted twigs, which in him thrive and flourish.
In *Adam* all are (9) curs'd, no saving fruit
Shall ever spring, from that sin-blasted root.
Yea all the branches that in him are found,
How (1) flourishing soever must be bound
And pil'd together, horrid news to tell !
To make an everlasting blaze in Hell.
God takes no pleasure in the sweetest bud
Disclos'd by nature, for the root's not good.
Some (2) boughs indeed richly adorned are
With natural fruits, which to the eye are fair,
Rare (3) Gifts, sweet dispositions, which attracts
The love of thousands, and from most exacts
Honour, and admiration. You'l admire
That such as these, are fewel for the fire.
Indeed ten thousand pities 'tis to see
Such lovely creatures in this case to be.
Did they by true Regeneration draw
The sap of life from *Jesses* root, (4) the Law
By which they now to wrath condemned are
Would cease to curse, and God such buds would spare.
But out of him, there's none of these can move
His unrelenting heart, or draw his love.
Then cut me off, from this accursed Tree ;
Lest I for ever be cut off from thee.

(5) Rom. 5. 18
(6) John 15. 6.
(7) Joh. 3. 16.
(8) 1 Cor. 15. 47.
(9) Gal. 3. 10.
(1) Heb. 12. 14.
(2) Mark 10. 20, 21.
(3) Heb. 6 4, 5.
(4) Rom. 1. 2.

CHAP. II.

Upon the union of the graff with the ſtock.

When ere you bud or graft, therein you ſee;
How Chriſt, and ſouls muſt here united be.

OBSERVATION.

WHen the Husbandman hath prepared his graffs in the ſeaſon of the year, he carries them, with the tools that are neceſſary for that work, to the tree or ſtock he intends to ingraft; and having cut off the top of the limb, in ſome ſtrait ſmooth part, he cleaves it with his knife or chiſſel, a little beſide the pith; knocks in his wedge to keep it open, then (having prepared the graff, he carefully ſets it into the cleft, joyning the inner ſide of the barks, of graff and ſtock together (there being the main current of the ſap) then pulls out his wedge, binds both together (as in barking) and clayes it up, to defend the tender graff and wounded ſtock, from the injuries of the Sun and rain.

Theſe tender cyences quickly take hold of the ſtock, and having immediate coalition with it, drink in its ſap, concoct it into their own nouriſhment, thrive better, and bear more and better fruits than ever they would have done upon their natural root, yea, the ſmalleſt bud, being carefully inocculated and bound cloſe to the ſtock, will in ſhort time become a flouriſhing and fruitful limb.

APPLICATION.

THis carries a moſt ſweet and lively reſemblance, of the ſouls union with Chriſt by faith; and indeed there is nothing in nature that ſhadows forth this great Goſpel-myſtery like it: 'Tis a thouſand pities, that any who are imployed about, or are but ſpectators of ſuch an action, ſhould terminate their thoughts (as too many do) in that natural object,

object, and not raiſe up their hearts to theſe heavenly meditations, which it ſo fairly offers them.

When a twig is to be ingrafted, or a bud inocculated, it's firſt cut off by a keen knife from the Tree on which it naturally grew. 1.

And when the Lord intends to graft a ſoul into Chriſt, the firſt work about it is cutting work, *Acts* 2. 37. their hearts were cut by conviction and deep compunction; no cyence is ingrafted without cutting, no ſoul united with Chriſt without a cutting ſenſe of ſin and miſery, *John* 16. 8, 9.

When the tender ſhoot is cut off from the Tree, there are (ordinarily) many more left behind upon the ſame Tree, as promiſing and vigorous as that which is taken; but it pleaſeth the Husbandman to chuſe this, and leave them. 2.

Even ſo it is in the removing or tranſplanting of a ſoul by converſion, it leaves many behind it in the ſtate of nature, as likely and promiſing as it ſelf; but ſo it pleaſeth God to take this ſoul, and leave many others; yea, often ſuch as grew upon the ſame root; I mean, the immediate parent, *Mal.* 1. 2. *was not* Eſau, Jacob's *brother (ſaith the Lord) yet I loved* Jacob, *and I hated* Eſau.

When the graffs are cut off, in order to this work, 'tis a critical ſeaſon with them; if they lye too long before they are ingrafted, or take not with the ſtock, they dye, and are never more to be recovered; they may ſtand in the ſtock a while, but are no part of the Tree. 3.

So when ſouls are under a work of conviction, it is a critical time with them; many a one have I known then to miſcarry, and never recovered again; they have indeed for a time ſtood like dead graffs in the ſtock, by an external dead hearted profeſſion, but never came to any thing; and as ſuch dead graffs, either fall off from the ſtock, or moulder away upon it, ſo do theſe, 1 *John* 2. 19.

The Husbandman when he hath cut off graffs, or tender buds, makes all the convenient ſpeed he can to cloſe them with the ſtock; the ſooner that's done, the better; they get no good by remaining as they are. And truly it concerns the ſervants of the Lord, who are imployed in this work, of 4.

ingrafting

ingrafting ſouls into Chriſt, to make all the haſte they can, to bring the convicted ſinner to a cloſure with Chriſt. As ſoon as ever the trembling Jaylor cryed out, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved? Paul* and *Silas* immediately direct him to *Chriſt*, Act. 16. 30, 31. They do not ſay, it's too ſoon for thee to act faith on *Chriſt*, thou art not yet humbled enough, but believe in the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, *and thou ſhalt be ſaved.*

5. There muſt be an inciſion made in the ſtock before any bud can be inocculated, or the ſtock muſt be cut and cleaved, before the cyence can be ingraffed according to that in the Poet. *Venerit inſitio, fac ramum ramus adoptet. (i. e.)*

To graffs, no living ſap the ſtocks impart;
Unleſs you wound, and cut them neer the heart.

Such an inciſion or wound was made upon *Chriſt*, in order to our ingrafting into him, *John* 19. 34. the opening of that deadly wound gives life to the ſouls of believers.

6. The graff is intimately united, and cloſly conjoyned with the ſtock, the conjunction is ſo cloſs, that they become one Tree.

There is alſo a moſt cloſs and intimate union betwixt Chriſt, and the ſoul that believeth in him. It is emphatically expreſſed by the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 6. 17. *He that is joyned to the Lord, is one ſpirit.* The word imports, the neareſt, cloſseſt and ſtricteſt union. *Chriſt* and the ſoul cleave together in a bleſſed oneneſs, as thoſe things do that are glewed one to another; ſo that, look as the graff is really in the ſtock, and the ſpirit or ſap of the ſtock is really in the graff, ſo a believer is really (though myſtically) in *Chriſt*; and the Spirit of *Chriſt* is really communicated to a believer. *I live*, ſaith *Paul*, *yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me*, Gal. 2. 20. *He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him*, 1 Joh. 4. 16.

7. Graffs are bound to the ſtock, by bonds made of hay or flags; theſe keep it ſteddy, elſe the wind would looſe it out of the ſtock.

The believing ſoul is alſo faſtened to Chriſt, by bands which will ſecure it from all danger of being looſed off from him any more. There are two bonds of this union; the Spirit on God's part, this is the firm bond of union, without which

which we could never be made one with Christ, *Rom.* 8. 9. *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*; and *faith* on our part, *Eph.* 3. 17. *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.* These hold strongly.

Though the stock be one and the same, yet all grafts do not thrive and flourish alike in it, some out-grow the rest; and those that grow not so well as the others do, the fault is in them, and not in the stock: So it is with souls really united to *Christ*; all do not flourish alike in him, the faith of some *grows* exceedingly, 2 *Thes.* 1. 3. the things that be in others are ready to die, *Rev.* 3. 2. and such souls must charge the fault upon themselves. *Christ* sends up living sap enough, not only to make all that are in him living, but fruitful branches. 8.

REFLECTIONS.

Four comfortable Reflections for a regenerate soul.

IS it so indeed betwixt *Christ* and my soul, as it is betwixt the ingrafted cyence and the stock? what honour and glory then hath Christ conferred upon me, a poor unworthy creature? What! to be made one with him, to be a living branch of him, to be joyned thus to the Lord. Oh! what a preferment is this! it is but a little while since I was a wild and cursed plant, growing in the wilderness amongst them that shall shortly be cut down and faggotted up for hell, for me to be taken from amongst them, and planted into Christ, O my soul! fall down and kiss the feet of free grace, that moved so freely towards so vile a creature! the dignities and honours of the Kings and Nobles of the earth, are nothing to mine; 'twas truly confessed by one of them, that it is a greater honour to be a member of Christ, than the head of an Empire. Do I say, a greater honour than is put upon the Kings of the Earth? I might have said, it's a greater honour than is put upon the Angels of heaven? for to which of them said Christ at any time, thou art bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh? *Behold! what manner of love is this!* 1 Joh. 3. 1. 1.

Look again upon the ingrafted cyences, O my soul! and thou shalt find, that when once they have taken hold of the stock, 2.

ſtock, they live as long as there is any ſap in the root; and becauſe he liveth, I ſhall live alſo, for my life is hid with Chriſt in God, *Col.* 3. 3. The graff is preſerved in the ſtock, and my ſoul is even ſo, *preſerved in Chriſt Jeſus*, Jude 1.

3. Am I joyned to the Lord as myſtical part, or branch of him; how dear art thou then, O my ſoul, to the God and father of my Lord Jeſus Chriſt? What! a branch of his dear Son! What can God with-hold from one ſo ingrafted? *Eph.* 1. 6. *All is yours* (ſaith my God) *for ye are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 23.

4. Once more, draw matter of inſtruction, as well as comfort from this ſweet obſervation. Seeing God hath put all this honour upon thee, by this moſt intimate union with his Chriſt, look to it (my ſoul) that thou live and walk as becomes a ſoul, thus one with the Lord; be thou tender over his glory doth not that which ſtrikes at the root, ſtrike at the very life of the graff? and ſhall not that which ſtrikes at the very glory of Chriſt, tenderly touch and affect thee? yea, be thou tenderly affected with all the reproaches that fall upon him from abroad, but eſpecially with thoſe which redound to him from thine own unfruitfulneſs. O, diſgrace not the root that bears thee; let it never be ſaid, that any evil fruit ſhall be found upon a branch that lives and is fed by ſuch a root.

The *Poem*.

OH what conſidering ſerious man can ſee
The cloſe conjunction of the graff and tree;
And whilſt he contemplates he doth not find,
This meditation graffed on his mind?

I am the (1) branch, and Chriſt the vine
thy gracious hand did pluck
Me from that native (2) ſtock of mine,
that I his ſap might ſuck.

(1) Joh. 15. 5.

(2) Rom. 11. 17

The

The bloudy (3) ſpear did in his heart
a deep inciſion make,
That grace to me he might impart,
And I thereof partake. (3) Joh. 19.34

The ſpirit (4) and faith is that firm band,
which binds us faſt together; (4) Rom. 8.9. Ep. 3. 17.
Thus we are claſped (5) hand in hand;
and (6) nothing us can ſever. (5) Cant. 2.16. (6) Rom. 8.35

Bleſs'd be that hand which did remove,
me from my native place,
This was the (7) wonder of thy love; (7) 1 Joh. 3.1.
the triumph of thy grace.

That I a wild (8) and curſed plant, (8) Ro. 11.17.
ſhould thus preferred be;
Who all thoſe (9) ornaments do want, (9) Mat. 11.25.
thou may'ſt in others ſee.

As long as e're the root doth live,
the branches are not dry;
Whilſt Chriſt hath grace, and life to give;
my ſoul can never (1) dye. (1) Joh. 14.19.

O bleſſed Saviour! never could
a graff cleave to the tree,
More (2) cloſs than thy poor creature would (2) Cant. 8.6.
united be with thee.

My ſoul, diſhonour not thy root,
'twill be a ſhame for thee;
To want the choiceſt ſorts of fruit,
and yet thus graffed (3) be. (3) Iſa. 5.4.

Thus you may ſhake from graffs before they blow,
More precious fruit than e're on trees did grow.

CHAP. III.

Upon the gathering in of fruits in Autumn.

When Trees are ſhak'd, but little fruit remains;
Juſt ſuch a remnant to the Lord pertains.

OBSERVATION.

IT is a pleaſant ſight in Autumn, to ſee the fruitful branches hanging full of cluſters, which weigh the boughs to the ground.

Aſpice curvatos pomorum pondere ramos
Ut ſua quod peperit vix ferat arbor onus.
Which I may thus Engliſh,
O what a pleaſant ſight it is to ſee,
The fruitful cluſters bowing down the tree.

But theſe laden branches are ſoon eaſed of their burden, for as ſoon as they are ripe, the Husbandman aſcends the tree, and ſhaking the limbs with all his might, cauſes a fruitful ſhower to fall like hailſtones upon the ground below, which being gather'd to a heap, are carried to the pound, broken all to pieces in the trough, and ſqueez'd to a dry lump in the preſs, whence all their juice and moiſture runs into the Fat. How few eſcape this Fat, of all thoſe multitudes that grew in the Orchard? If you now look upon the Trees, you may poſſibly ſee here one, and there another, two or three upon the outmoſt branches, but nothing in compariſon to the vaſt numbers that are thus uſed.

APPLICATION.

THis ſmall remains of fruit, which are either left upon the tree, or gather'd in for an hoard, do well reſemble that ſmall number of Gods elect in the world, which free

grace

grace hath reſerved out of the general ruine of mankind. Four things are excellently ſhadowed forth to us by this ſimilitude.

1 You ſee in a fruitful Autumn, the trees even oppreſt and overladen with the weight of their own fruits before the ſhaking time come, and then they are eaſed of their burden. Thus the whole creation groans under the weight of their ſins who inhabit it, *Rom.* 8.22. the creatures are in bondage, and by an elegant *Proſopopeia*, are ſaid, both to groan and wait for deliverance. The original ſin of man brought an original curſe, which burdens the creature, *Gen.*3.17. *Curſed is the ground for thy ſake*; and the actual ſin of man brings actual curſes upon the creature, *Pſal.*107.34. Thus the inhabitants of the world load and burden it, as the limbs of a tree are burdened, and ſometimes broken with the weight of their own fruit.

2. You may obſerve it in your Orchards every year, what abundance of fruits daily fall, either by ſtorms, or of their own accord; but when the ſhaking time comes, then the ground is covered all over with fruit. Thus it is with the world, that myſtical tree, with reſpect to men, that inhabit it; there is not a year, day or hour, in which ſome drop not, as it were, of their own accord by a natural death; and ſometimes wars and Epidemical plagues blow down thouſands together into their graves, theſe are as high winds in a fruitful Orchard, but when the ſhaking time, the Autumn of the world comes; then all its inhabitants ſhall be ſhaken down together, either by death, or a tranſlation equivolent thereunto.

3. When fruits are ſhaken down from their trees, then the Husbandman ſeparates them; the far greateſt part for the pound, and ſome few he reſerves for an hoard, which are brought to his table, and eaten with pleaſure. This excellently ſhadows forth that great ſeparation, which Chriſt will make in the end of the world; when ſome ſhall be caſt into the wine-preſs of the *Almighties* wrath, and others preſerved for glory.

Thoſe fruits which are preſerved on the tree, or in the

hoard, are comparatively but an handful to thoſe that are broken in the pound. Alas! 'tis ſcarce one of a thouſand, and ſuch a ſmall remnant of Elected ſouls hath God reſerved for glory.

I look upon the World as a great Tree, conſiſting of four large limbs or branches; this branch or diviſion of it on which we grow, hath doubtleſs a greater number of Gods elect upon it, than the other three; and yet when I look with a ſerious and conſidering eye upon this fruitful *European* branch, and ſee how much rotten and withered fruit there grows upon it, it makes me ſay as *Chryſoſtom* did of his populous *Antioch*, Ah, how ſmall a remnant hath *Jeſus Chriſt* among theſe vaſt numbers! *Many* indeed *are called*, but, ah, *how few are choſen*! Mat. 20. 16. Alas! they are but as the gleanings when the vintage is done; here and there one upon its outmoſt branches. To allude to that, *Iſa.* 17. 6. it was a ſad Obſervation which that ſearching Scholar (Mr. *Brierwood*) long ſince made upon the world, that dividing it into thirty equal parts, he found no leſs than nineteen of them wholly overſpread with Idolatry and Heatheniſh darkneſs! and of the eleven remaining parts, no leſs than ſix are *Mahumetans*; ſo that there remain but five of thirty, which profeſs the Chriſtian Religion at large; and the far greater part of theſe remaining five, are invellop'd and drowned in Popiſh darkneſs; ſo that you ſee the reformed *Proteſtant Religion* is confined to a ſmall ſpot of ground indeed. Now, if from theſe we ſubſtract all the groſly ignorant, openly profane, meerly civil, and ſecretly hypocritical; judge then in your ſelves, how ſmall a ſcantling of the world falls to Chriſts ſhare!

Well might Chriſt ſay, *Mat.*7.14. *Narrow is the way, and ſtrait is the gate, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* And again, *Luke* 12.32. *Fear not, little, little flock.* The large piece goes to the devil, a little remnant is Chriſts, *Rom.* 9. 27. Saints in Scripture are called *jewels*, Mal. 3. 17. Precious pearls and diamonds, which the Latines call *Uniones. Quia nulli duo ſimul reperiuntur* (ſaith *Pliny*) becauſe nature gives them not by pairs, but one by one. How many

pebbles

pebbles to one pearl? Sutable to this notion, is that complaint of the Prophet, *Mich.* 7. 1, 2. *Wo is me, for I am as when they have gathered the Summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage, there is no cluster to eat; my soul desired the first ripe fruits; the good man is perished out of the earth, and there is none, (i. e.* none comparatively) *upright among men.* The *Prophet* alludes to a poor hungry man, that after the gathering time is past, comes into an Orchard, desiring some choice fruits to eat, but alas! he finds none; there is no cluster; possibly here and there a single Saint, like a single apple, here and there one after the shaking time. True Saints are the worlds rarities.

REFLECTIONS.

WHat then will be my lot, when that great shaking time shall come, who have followed the multitude, and gone with the tyde of the world? how even when I have been pressed to strictness and singular diligence in the matters of salvation, and told what a narrow way the way of life is, have I put it off with this; If it be so, then wo to thousands. Ah foolish heart! thousands and ten thousands shall be woful and miserable indeed, to all eternity. Will it be any mitigation to my misery, that I shall have thousands of miserable companions with me in hell? or will it be admitted for a good plea at the Judgment-seat, Lord, I did as the generality of my neighbours in the world did; except it were here and there a more precise person, I saw none, but lived as I lived. Ah, foolish sinner! Is it not better go to heaven alone, than to hell with company? the worst courses, have alwayes the most imitators, and the road to destruction is thronged with passengers.

1. A Reflection for one that follows the example of the multitude.

And how little better is my condition? who have often fathered the wickedness of my own heart, upon the incouragements of mercy. Thus hath my heart pleaded against strictness and duty. God is a merciful God, and will not be so severe with the world to damn so many thousands as are in my condition: Deluded soul, if God had damned the whole race

2. A Reflection for an abuser of mercy.

race of *Adam*, he had done them no wrong; yea, there is more mercy in ſaving but one man, than there is of ſeverity and rigour in damning all: how many drunkards and adulterers have lived and dyed with thy plea in their mouths? *God is a merciful God*; but yet his word expreſly ſaith, *Be not deceived, ſuch ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9. God indeed, is a God of infinite mercy; but he will never exerciſe his mercy to the prejudice of his truth.

A Reflection for an elect ſoul.

O, what rich grace is here! that in a general Shipwrack mercy ſhould caſt forth a line or plank to ſave me! that when millions periſh, I with a few more ſhould eſcape that perdition. Was it the Fathers good pleaſure to beſtow the kingdom upon a little flock, and to make me one of that number? What ſingular obligations hath mercy put upon my ſoul! the fewer are ſaved, the more cauſe have they that are, to admire their Saviour! If but one of a thouſand had been damned, yet my ſalvation would have been an act of infinite grace; but when ſcarce one of a thouſand are ſaved, what ſhall I call that grace, that caſt my lot among them!

The *Poem*.

HE that with ſpiritual eyes in Autumn ſees
The heaps of fruit which fall from ſhaken trees,
Like ſtorms of hailſtones; and can hardly find
One of a thouſand that remains behind.
Methinks this Meditation ſhould awake
His ſoul; and make it like thoſe trees to ſhake.
Of all the cluſters which ſo lately grew
Upon theſe trees, how few can they now ſhew?
Here one (1) and there another; two or three
Upon the outmoſt branches of the tree.
The greateſt numbers to the pound are born,
Squeez'd in the trough; and all to pieces torn:

(1) Iſa. 17. 6.

This

This little handful's left, to shadow forth
To me Gods (2) remnant in this peopl'd earth.
If o're the whole terrestrial globe I look,
The Gospel visits but (3) a little nook.
The rest with horrid (4) darkness overspread,
Are fast asleep; yea, in transgressions dead,
Whole droves to hell, the devil daily drives;
Not one amongst them once (5) resists or strives.
And in this little heaven-inlightned spot,
How vast an interest hath Satan got?
But few of holiness profession make,
And if from those that do profess I take
The self-deluding hypocrites, I fear
To think how few (6) remain that are sincere.
O tax not mercy that it saves so few,
But rather wonder that the Lord should shew
Mercy to any; (7) quarrel not with grace,
But for thy self Gods gracious terms embrace.
When all were (8) Shipwrackt, thou shouldst wonder more
To find thy self so strangely cast ashore
And there to meet with any that can tell
How narrowly they also (9) scap'd from hell.
The smaller numbers mercy saves, the higher
Ingagements lye on thee (1) still to admire.
Had the whole *species* perish'd in their sin,
And not one individual saved bin;
Yet every (2) tongue before him must be mute,
Confess his righteousness; but not dispute.
Or had the hand of mercy which is (3) free
Taken another, and pass'd over me;
I still must justifie him, and my tongue
Confess my maker had done me no wrong.
But if my (4) name he please to let me see
Enroll'd among those few that saved be,
What admiration should such mercy move!
What thanks, and (5) praise, and everlasting love!

(2) Rom. 9. 27.
(3) 1 Joh. 5. 19. Psal. 147. 20.
(4) Psal. 74. 20.
(5) 2 Tim. 2. 25
(6) Mat. 7. 14.
(7) Rom. 9. 22.
(8) Rom. 5. 16.
(9) 1 Pet. 4. 18.
(1) Joh. 14. 22.
(2) Rom. 9. 18.
(3) Rom. 5. 15.
(4) Heb. 12. 23.
(5) Rev. 1. 5, 6.

CHAP

CHAP. IV.

Upon the cutting down of dead trees.

Dead barren Trees you for the fire prepare,
In ſuch a caſe, all fruitleſs perſons are.

OBSERVATION.

AFter many years patience, in the uſe of all means to recover a fruit Tree, if the Husbandman ſee it be quite dead, and that there can be no more expectation of any fruit from it, he brings his ax and hews it down by the root; and from the Orchard its carried to the fire, it being then fit for nothing elſe; he reckons it imprudent to let ſuch a uſeleſs tree abide in good ground, where another might be planted in its room, that will better pay for the ground it ſtands in. I my ſelf once ſaw a large Orchard of fair, but fruitleſs trees, all rooted up, rived abroad, and ricked up for the fire.

APPLICATION.

THus deals the Lord by uſeleſs and barren Profeſſors who do but cumber his ground, *Mat.* 3. 10. *And now alſo, the ax is laid to the root of the trees; therefore every tree that brings not forth good fruit, is hewn down and caſt into the fire.* And *Luke* 13. 7. *Then ſaid the dreſſer of the vineyard, Behold this three years I came ſeeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none; cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?* Theſe three years, alluding to the time of his Miniſtery, he being at that time entring upon his laſt half year, as one obſerves, by harmonizing the Evangeliſts; ſo long he had waited for the fruit of his Miniſtery, among thoſe dead-hearted *Jews*: now his patience is even at an end, cut them down (ſaith he) why cumber they the ground? I will plant others, (*viz.* the *Gentiles*) in their

their room. This hewing down of the barren tree doth in a lively manner ſhadow forth Gods judicial proceedings againſt formal and empty Profeſſors under the Goſpel; and the reſemblance clearly holds in theſe following particulars.

The tree that is to be hewen down for the fire, ſtands in the Orchard among other flouriſhing trees, where it hath enjoyed the benefit of a good ſoyl, a ſtrong fence and much culture; but being barren, theſe priviledges ſecure it not from the fire. It is not our ſtanding in the viſible Church, by a powerleſs profeſſion among real Saints, with whom we have been aſſociated, and enjoyed the rich and excellent waterings of Ordinances, that can ſecure us from the wrath of God, *Mat.* 3. 8. 9. *Bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and think not to ſay within your ſelves, we have* Abraham *to our father.* Neither *Abraham*, nor *Abrahams* God, will acknowledge ſuch degenerate children; if *Abrahams* faith be not in your *hearts*, it will be no advantage that *Abrahams* bloud runs in your *veins*. 'Twill be a poor plea for *Judas*, when he ſhall ſtand before *Chriſt* in judgment, to ſay, Lord, I was one of thy family, I preached for thee, I did eat and drink in thy preſence. Let theſe Scriptures be conſulted, *Mat.* 7.22. *Mat.* 25. 11, 12. *Rom.* 2. 17. *ad* 25. 1.

The Husbandman doth not preſentiy cut down the tree becauſe it puts not forth as ſoon as other trees do, but waits as long as there is any hope, and then cuts it down. Thus doth God wait upon barren dead-hearted perſons, from Sabbath to Sabbath, and from year to year; for the Lord is long-ſuffering to us-ward, and not willing that any ſhould periſh, but all come to repentance, 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. Thus the long-ſuffering of God waited in the dayes of *Noah* upon thoſe dry trees, who are now ſmoaking and flaming in hell, 1 *Pet.* 3. 20. He waits long on ſinners, but keeps exact accounts of every year and day of his patience, *Luke* 13. 7. *Theſe three years.* And *Jer.* 25. 3. Theſe 23 years. 2.

When the time is come to cut it down, the dead tree cannot poſſibly reſiſt the ſtroke of the ax, but receives the blow, and falls before it. No more can the ſtouteſt ſinner reſiſt the fatal ſtroke of death, by which the Lord hews him 3.

down, *Eccleſ.* 8. 8. *There is no man that hath power over the Spirit, to retain the Spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death, and there is no diſcharge in that war.* When the pale horſe comes, away you muſt into the land of darkneſs; Though thou cry with *Adrian*, O my poor ſoul, whither art thou going! die thou muſt, thou barren Profeſſor; though it were better for thee to do any thing elſe than to die. What a dreadful ſcreech will thy conſcience give, when it ſees the ax at thy root! and ſay to thee, as it is, *Ezek.* 7. 6. *An end is come, the end is come; it watcheth for thee, behold it is come.* O, ſaid *Henry Beauford*, (that rich and wretched Cardinal, Biſhop of *Wincheſter*, and Chancellor of *England*, when he perceived whereto he muſt) wherefore muſt I die? If the whole Realm would ſave my life, I am able either by policy to get it, or by riches to buy it. Fye (quoth he) will not death be hired? will riches do nothing? No, neither riches nor policy can then avail.

4. That ſide to which the Tree leaned moſt while it ſtood, that way it will fall, when it is cut down; and as it falls ſo it lies, whether to the South or North, *Eccleſ.* 11. 3. So it fares with theſe myſtical trees; I mean fruitleſs Profeſſors. Had their hearts and affections inclined and bended heavenward whilſt they lived, that way no doubt they had fallen at their death; but as their hearts inclined to ſin, and ever bended to the world; ſo when God gives the fatal ſtroke, they muſt fall hell-ward, and wrath-ward; and how dreadful will ſuch a fall be?

5. When the dead tree is carried out of the Orchard, it ſhall never be among the living trees of the Orchard any more; many years it grew among them, but now it ſhall never have a place there again. And when the barren Profeſſor is carried out of the world by death, he ſhall never be aſſociated with the Saints any more. He may then ſay, farewell all ye Saints, among whom I lived, and with whom I ſo often heard, faſted, prayed. I ſhall never ſee your faces more, *Mat.* 8. 11, 12. I ſay unto you, that many ſhall come from the Eaſt and Weſt, and North and South, and ſhall ſit down with *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, in the Kingdom of heaven; but the

the children of the Kingdom ſhall be caſt forth into outer darkneſs, there ſhall be weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth.

When the dead tree is carried out of the Orchard, the Husbandman cuts off his branches, and rives him aſunder with his wedges. This alſo is the lot of barren Profeſſors. *The Lord of that ſervant will come in a day, when he looketh not for him, and will cut him aſunder*; he ſhall be diſſected, or cut abroad, *Luke* 12. 46. 6.

Now therefore conſider this, ye that forget God, leſt I tear (or rend) you in pieces, *Pſal.* 50. 22. O direful day! when the ſame hand which planted, pruned, and watered thee ſo long, and ſo tenderly, ſhall now ſtrike mortal ſtrokes at thee, and that without pity: *For he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will ſhew them no favour*, Iſa. 27. 11. For the day of mercy is over, and the day of his wrath is fully come.

When this tree is cleav'd abroad, then itsi rotten, hollow inſide appears, which was the cauſe of its barrenneſs; it looked like a Fair and ſound bodied tree, but now all may ſee how rotten it is at the heart: So will God in that day, when he ſhall diſſect the barren Profeſſor, diſcover the rottenneſs of his heart, and unſoundneſs of his principles and ends, then they who never ſuſpected him before, ſhall ſee what a hollow and rotten-hearted Profeſſor he was. 7.

Laſtly, the fruitleſs tree is caſt into the fire. This alſo is the end and ſad iſſue of formality, *John* 15. 6. *He is caſt forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them and caſt them into the fire, and they are burned.* This is an undoubted truth, That there is no plant in Gods vineyard, but he will have glory from it by bearing fruit, or glory on it by burning in the fire. In this fire ſhall they lye, *gnaſhing their teeth*, *Luke* 13.38. and that both in indignation againſt the Saints, whom they ſhall ſee in glory, and againſt *Jeſus Chriſt*, who would not ſave them; and againſt themſelves, for loſing ſo fooliſhly the opportunities of ſalvation. Do you behold when you ſit by the fire, the froth that boyles out of thoſe flaming logs? O think of that ſome and rage of theſe un- 8.

done creatures, foaming and gnaſhing their teeth in that fire which is not quenched, *Mark* 9. 44.

REFLECTION.

A Reflection for a formal Hypocrite.

HOw often have I paſſed by ſuch barren trees, with a more barren heart? as little thinking ſuch a tree to be the emblem of my ſelf, as *Nebuchadnezzar* did, when he ſaw that tree in a dream which repreſented himſelf, and ſhadowed forth to him his enſuing miſery, *Dan.* 4. 13. But, Oh my conſcience! my drouſie, ſleepy conſcience! wert thou but tender and faithful to me, thou wouldſt make as round and terrible an application of ſuch a ſpectacle to me as the faithful Prophet did to him, *v.* 22. And thus wouldſt thou, O my ſoul, bemoan thy condition!

Poor wretch, here I grow for a little time, among the trees of righteouſneſs, the plants of renown; but I am none of them, I was never planted a right ſeed; ſome green and flouriſhing leaves of profeſſion indeed I have, which deceive others, but God cannot be deceived; he ſees I am fruitleſs and rotten at the heart. Poor ſoul, what will thine end be but burning! Behold the ax lyeth by thy root, and wonder it is, that there it ſhould lye ſo long, and I yet ſtanding! ſtill mercy pleads for a fruitleſs creature; Lord, ſpare it one year longer. Alas! he need ſtrike no great blow to ruine me, his very breath blows to deſtruction, *Job* 4. 9. a frown of his face can blaſt and ruine me, *Pſal.* 80. 6. he is daily ſollicited by his juſtice to hew me down, and yet I ſtand. Lord, cure my barrenneſs; I know thou hadſt rather ſee fruit, than fire upon me.

The

The *Poem.*

IF after pains and patience, you can see
No hopes of fruit (1) down goes the barren tree:
You will not suffer trees that are unsound,
And barren too, to cumber useful ground.
The fatal ax is (2) laid unto the root
It's fit for fire, when unfit for fruit.
But though this be a dead, and barren tree;
Reader, I would not have it so to thee.
May it to thee this serious thought suggest,
In all the Orchard this dead tree's the best.
Think on it sadly, lay it close to heart;
This is the case in which thou wast, or art.
If so thou wast, but (3) now dost live and grow,
And bring forth fruit, what praise, and thanks dost ow
To that wise Husbandman that made thee so!
O think when justice lifted up its hand,
How (4) mercy did then interceding stand!
How pity did on thy behalf appear,
To beg reprieval for another year.
Stop Lord, forbear him; all hope is not past,
He can but be for fire at the last.
Though many Sermons, many a gracious call
He hath resisted like a brazen wall.
The next (5) may win him, then thy grace shall raise
Unto it self a (6) monument of praise.
How should this meditation thaw and melt
The heart of him that hath such mercy felt.
But if thou still remain a barren tree,
Then here as in a mirrour; thou may'st see
Thy wretched state, when justice at a blow,
Requites Gods patience in thine overthrow.
And canst thou (7) bear it? can thy heart endure.
To think of everlasting burnings? sure
This must thy lot, thy fearful portion be;
If thou continue still a barren tree.

(1) Luk. 13.7.
(2) Mat. 3.10.
(3) Eph. 3. 1.
John 15. 1.
(4) Luk. 13. 8.
(5) Rom. 2. 4.
(6) Luk. 15. 7.
(7) Psal. 76.7.

An Introduction TO THE Third PART OF HUSBANDRY

NOw from the pleaſant Orchard let us walk
A turn i'th fields, and there converſe and talk
With Cows and Horſes, they can teach us ſome
Choice Leſſons, though irrational and dumb.
My Reader's weary, yet I do not fear
To be forſaken by one Reader here.
He'l doubtleſs ſtay to hear what queſtions I
Propound to beaſts, and how they make reply.
The fatted Ox, and pamper'd horſe you ride;
Their careleſs Maſter for his care thus chide.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Upon the Husbandmans care for his cattel.

More care for Horſe and Oxen many take
Than for their Souls, or deareſt Childrens ſake.

OBSERVATION.

MAny Husbandmen are exceſſively careful about their cattel, riſing themſelves early, or cauſing their ſervants to riſe betimes to provender and dreſs them. Much time is ſpent in ſome Countreys, in trimming and adorning their Horſes with curious trappings and plumes of feathers; and if at any time a beaſt be ſick, what care is taken to recover and heal them? you will be ſure they ſhall want nothing that is neceſſary for them; yea, many will chuſe rather to want themſelves, than ſuffer their Horſes ſo to do; and take a great deal of comfort to ſee them thrive and proſper under their hands.

APPLICATION.

WHat one ſaid of bloudy *Herod*, who ſlew ſo many children at *Bethlehem*, That it were better to be his ſwine, than his Son, may be truly enough applyed to ſome Parents and Maſters, who take leſs care for the ſaving the ſouls of their children and ſervants, than they do for the bodies of thoſe beaſts which daily feed at their ſtalls and cribs. Many there be who do in reference to their ſouls, as *Jacob* did, with reſpect to the preſervation of their bodies, when he put all the herds of cattel before, and his Wives and little ones behind, as he went to meet his brother *Eſau*. 'Tis a weighty ſaying of a grave Author; *It's vile ingratitude to rejoyce when cattel multiply, and repine when children increaſe; its Heatheniſh diſtruſtfulneſs, to fear, that he who provides for your beaſts,*

Jenk. on *Jude* par. 2. p. 170.

beaſts, will not provide for your children; and it's no leſs than unnatural cruelty to be careful of the bodies of beaſts, & careleſs of the ſouls of children. Let us but a little compare your care and diligence in both reſpects, and ſee in a few particulars, whether you do indeed value your own, or your children and ſervants ſouls, as you do the life and health of a beaſt.

1. Your care for your very Horſes is expreſſed early, whilſt they are but Colts, and not come to do you any ſervice; you are willing to be at pains and coſt, to have them broken and brought to their way. This is more than ever many of them did for their children; they can ſee them wild and profane, naturally taking a ſtroke or way of wickedneſs, but yet never were at any pains or coſt to break them; theſe muſt be fondel'd and cockered up in the natural way of their own corruption and wickedneſs, and not a rod or reproof uſed to break them of it.

'Tis obſerved of the *Perſians*, that they put out their children to School as ſoon as they could ſpeak, and would not ſee them in ſeven years after, leſt their indulgence ſhould do them hurt. *Clarks* Mir. p. 506.

2. You keep your conſtant ſet times, morning and evening, to feed, water and dreſs your cattel, and will by no means neglect it once; but how many times have you neglected morning and evening duties in your families? yea, how many be there, whoſe very tables, in reſpect of any worſhip God hath there, do very little differ from the very cribs and mangers at which their horſes feed? As ſoon as you are up in a morning, you are with your beaſts before you have been with your God; how little do ſuch differ from beaſts? and happy were it, if they were no more accountable to God than their beaſts are?

3. The end of your care, coſt and pains about your cattel is, that they may be ſtrong for labour, and the more ſerviceable to you; thus you comply with the end of their beings. But how rare a thing is it, to find theſe men as careful to fit their poſterity to be uſeful and ſerviceable to God in their generations, which is the end of their beings? If you can make them rich, and provide good matches for them, you reckon

that you have fully discharged the duty of parents; if they will learn to hold the Plow, that you are willing to teach them: But when did you spend an hour to teach them the way of salvation?

Now to convince such careless Parents of the heinousness of their sin, let these four Queries be solemnly considered.

Qu. 1. Whether this be a sufficient discharge of that great duty which God hath laid upon Christian Parents, in reference to their families? That God hath charged them with the souls of their families is undeniable, *Deut.*6.6,7. *Eph.*6.4. If God had not cloathed you with his authority, to command them in the way of the Lord; he would never have charged them so strictly to yield you obedience as he hath done, *Eph.* 6. 1. *Col.*3. 20. Well, a great trust is reposed in you, look to your duty, for without dispute you shall answer for it.

Qu. 2. Whether it be likely, if the time of youth (which is the moulding age) be neglected, they will be wrought upon to any good afterwards? Husbandmen, let me put a sensible case to you; Do you not see in your very horses, that whilst they are young, you can bring them to any way; but if once they have got a false stroke, and by long custom it be grown natural to them, then there is no breaking them of it: yea, you see it, in your very Orchards, you may bring a tender twig to grow in what form you please; but when its grown to a sturdy limb, there is no bending it afterwards to any other form than what it naturally took. Thus it is with children, *Prov.* 22.6. *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.*

Qu. 3. Whether, if you neglect to instruct them in the way of the Lord, *Satan*, and their own natural corruptions, will not instruct them in the way to hell? Consider this ye careless Parents; if you will not teach your children, the Devill will teach them; if you shew them not how to pray, he will shew them how to curse and swear, and take the name of the Lord in vain; if you grudge time and pains about their souls, the Devil doth not. Oh, 'tis a sad consideration, that so many children should be put to School to the devil!

Qu. 4. What comfort are you like to have from them when they

are

are old, if you bring them not up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord when they are young? Many Parents have lived to reap in their old age, the fruit of their own folly and careleſsneſs, in the looſe and vain education of their children. By *Lieurgus* his Law, no Parent was to be relieved by his children in age, if he gave them not good education in their youth; and it is a Law at this day among the *Switzers*, that if any child be condemned to die for a capital offence, the Parents of that child are to be his executioners; theſe Laws were made to provoke Parents to look better to their charge. Believe this as an undoubted truth; That that child which becomes (through thy default) an inſtrument to diſhonour God, ſhall prove ſooner or later, a ſon or daughter of ſorrow to thee.

REFLECTIONS.

GOd hath found out my ſin this day. This hath been my practiſe ever ſince I had a family committed to my charge; I have ſpent more time and pains about the bodies of my beaſts, then the ſouls of my children; beaſt that I am, for ſo doing; little have I conſidered the preciouſneſs of my own, or their immortal ſouls. How careful have I been to provide fodder to preſerve my cattel in the Winter, whilſt I leave my own, and their ſouls to periſh to eternity, and make no proviſion for them? Surely my children will one day curſe the time that ever they were born unto ſuch a cruel father, or of ſuch a mercileſs mother. Should I bring home the plague into my family, and live to ſee all my poor children lye dead by the walls, if I had not the heart of a Tyger, ſuch a ſight would melt my heart; and yet, the death of their ſouls by the ſin which I propagated to them affects me not! Ah, that I could ſay, I had done but as much for them, as I have done for a beaſt that periſheth!

1. A Reflection for careleſs Parents.

But unhappy wretch that I am, God caſt a better lot for me, I am the off-ſpring of religious and tender Parents, who have alwayes deeply concerned themſelves in the everlaſting ſtate of my ſoul; many prayers and tears have they poured

2. A Reflection for the diſobedient child of a gracious Parent

poured out to God for me, both in my hearing as well as in ſecret; many holy and wholſom counſels have they from time to time dropt upon me; many precious examples have they ſet in their own practiſe before me; many a time when I have ſinned againſt the Lord, have they ſtood over me with a rod in their hands, and tears in their eyes, uſing all means to reclaim me; but like an ungracious wretch I have ſlighted all their counſels, grieved their hearts, and imbittered their lives to them, by my ſinful courſes. Ah, my ſoul! thou art a degenerate Plant; better will it be with the off-ſpring of infidels, than with thee, if repentance prevent not; now I live in one family with them, but ſhortly I ſhall be ſeparated from them, as far as hell is from heaven; they now tenderly pity my miſery, but then they ſhall approve and applaud the righteous ſentence of Chriſt upon me: So little priviledge ſhall I then have from my relation to them, that they ſhall be produced as witneſſes againſt me, and all their rejected counſels, reproofs, and examples, charged home upon me, as the aggravations of my wickedneſs; and better it will be, when it ſhall come to that, that I had been brought forth by a beaſt, than ſprang from the loyns of ſuch Parents.

The *Poem.*

YOur cattel in fat paſtures thrive and grow,
There's nothing wanting; that ſhould make them ſo.
(1) Iſa. 1. 3. The pamper'd horſe commends his Maſters (1) care,
(2) Gen. 24. 31, 32. Who neither pains, or coſt, doth grudge or (2) ſpare.
But art not thou mean while, the verieſt fool;
That pamper'ſt beaſts, and ſtarv'ſt thy precious ſoul?
(3) Eccl. 31. 21 'Twere well, if you could (3) dye, as now you live
Like beaſts; and had no more account to give.
O that theſe lines, your folly might detect!
Who both your own, and childrens ſouls neglect.

To care for beaſts. O man, prepare to hear
The doleful'ſt language, that e're pierc'd thine ear!
When you your children once in hell ſhall meet,
And with ſuch language their damn'd parents greet,
" O curſed father, wretched mother, why
" Was I your off-ſpring? would to God that I
" Had ſprung from Tygers, who more (4) tender be
" Unto their young, than you have been to me.
" How did you ſpend your thoughts, time, care and coſt
" About my body? whilſt my ſoul was (5) loſt.
" Did you not know I had a ſoul that muſt
" Live, (6) when this body was reſolv'd to duſt?
" You could not chuſe but underſtand if I,
" Without an intereſt in Chriſt did dye,
" It needs muſt (7) come to this; O how could you
" Prove ſo remorſleſs, and no pity ſhew!
" Oh cruel parents! I may curſe the day
" That I was born of ſuch as did betray
" Their child to endleſs torments. Now muſt I
" With, and through you, in flames for ever lye.
Let this make every parent tremble, leſt
He loſe his child, whilſt caring for his beaſt.
Or leſt his own poor ſoul do ſtarve and pine
Whilſt he takes thoughts for Horſes, Sheep and kine.

(4) Nah. 2. 12. Lam. 4. 3.

(5) Mat. 16. 26.

(6) Eccl. 3. 21.

(7) Mar. 16. 16

CHAP. II.

When under loads your beaſts do groan, think then
How great a mercy 'tis that you are men.

Upon the hard labour and cruel uſage of beaſts.

OBSERVATION.

THough ſome men be exceſſively careful and tender over their beaſts (as was noted in the former Chapter) yet others

others are cruel and mercileſs towards them, not regarding how they ride or burden them. How often have I ſeen them fainting under their loads? wrought off their legs, and turned out with galled backs into the fields, or high-wayes, to ſhift for a little graſs? many times have I heard and pitied them, groaning under unreaſonable burdens, and beaten on by mercileſs drivers, till at laſt by ſuch cruel uſage they have been deſtroyed, and then caſt into a ditch for dogs meat!

APPLICATION.

Such ſights as theſe ſhould make men thankful for the mercy of their Creation, and bleſs their bountiful Creator, that they were not made ſuch creatures themſelves. Some beaſts are made *ad eſum*, only for food, being no otherwiſe uſeful to man, as *ſwine*, &c. theſe are only fed for ſlaughter, we kill and eat them, and regard not their cryes and ſtruglings when the knife is thruſt to their very hearts; others are only *ad uſum*, for ſervice, whilſt living, but unprofitable when dead; as *Horſes*, theſe we make to drudge and toyl for us from day to day, but kill them not; others are both *ad eſum, & uſum*, for food when dead, and ſervice whilſt alive, as the *Ox*. Theſe we make to plow our fields, draw our carriages, and afterwards prepare them for ſlaughter.

But man was made for nobler ends, created Lord of the lower world; not to ſerve, but to be ſerved by other creatures; a mercy able to melt the hardeſt heart into thankfulneſs. I remember, *Luther* preſſing men to be thankful, that they are not brought into the loweſt condition of creatures, and to bleſs God that they can ſee any creature below themſelves, gives us a famous inſtance in the following ſtory: Two *Cardinals* (ſaith he) riding in a great deal of pomp to the Council of *Conſtance*, by the way they heard a man in the fields, weeping and wailing bitterly, they rode to him, and asked what he ailed? perceiving his eye intently fixed upon an ugly toad, he told them that his heart was melted with the conſideration of this mercy, that God had not made him ſuch

Luther in 3. precept.

a deformed and loathſom creature, though he were formed out of the ſame clay with it: *Hoc eſt quod amare fleo*, ſaid he, This is that, that makes me weep bitterly. Whereupon one of the *Cardinals* cryes out, Well ſaid the Father, the unlearned will riſe and take heaven, when we with all our learning ſhall be thruſt into hell. That which melted the heart of this poor man, ſhould melt every heart when we behold the miſery to which theſe poor creatures are ſubjected, And this will appear a mercy of no ſlight conſideration, if we but draw a compariſon betwixt our ſelves, and theſe irrational creatures, in theſe three particulars.

Though they and we were made of the ſame mould and clay, yet how much better hath God dealt with us, even as to the outward man? the ſtructure of our bodies is much more excellent. God made other creatures by a word of command, but man by counſel; it was not be Thou, but let Us make man. We might have been made ſtones without ſence, or beaſts without reaſon, but we were made men. The noble ſtructure and ſymetry of our bodies invites our ſouls, not only to thankfulneſs, but admiration. *David* ſpeaking of the curious frame of the body, ſaith, *I am wonderfully made*, *Pſal.* 139. 14. or as the vulgar reads it, painted as with a needle; like ſome rich piece of needle-work curiouſly embroydered with nerves and veins. Was any part of the common lump of clay thus faſhioned? *Galen* gave *Epicurus* an hundred years time to imagine a more commodious ſituation, configuration, or compoſition of any one part of a humane body; and (as one ſaith) if all the Angels in heaven had ſtudied to this day, they could not have caſt the body of man into a more curious mould. 1.

How little eaſe or reſt have they? they live not many years, and thoſe they do is in bondage and miſery, groaning under the effects of ſin; but God hath provided better for us, even as to our outward condition in the world; we have the more reſt, becauſe they have ſo little. How many refreſhments and comforts hath God provided for us, of which they are uncapable? if we be weary with labour, we can take our 2.

our reſt; but freſh or weary, they muſt ſtand to it, or ſink under it from day to day.

3. What a narrow capacity hath God given to beaſts! what a large capacity to man! Alas! they are only capable of a little ſenſitive pleaſure; as you ſhall ſee ſometimes, how they will friſk in a green paſture, this is all they be capable of, and this death puts an end to; but how comprehenſive are our ſouls in their capacities? we are made in the image of God; we can look beyond preſent things, and are capable of the higheſt happineſs, and that to all eternity; the ſoul of a beaſt is but a material form, which wholly depending upon, muſt needs dye with the body; but our ſouls are a divine ſpark or blaſt; and when the body dyes, it dyes not with it, but ſubſiſts even in its ſeparated ſtate.

REFLECTIONS.

1. A Reflection for an unthankful ſinner

HOw great a ſin is ingratitude to God, for ſuch a common, but choice mercy of Creation, and proviſion for me in this world? There is no creature made worſe by kindneſs, but man. There is a kind of gratitude which I may obſerve even in theſe bruit beaſts; they do in their way acknowledge their benefactors; *The Ox knows his Owner, and the Aſs his Maſters Crib.* How ready are they to ſerve ſuch as feed and cheriſh them? but I have been Both unthankful and unſerviceable to my Creator and Benefactor, that hath done me good all my dayes; thoſe poor creatures that ſweat and groan under the loads that I lay upon them, never ſinned againſt God, nor tranſgreſſed the Laws of their Creation as I have done; and yet God hath dealt better with me than with them. Oh that the bounty of God, and his diſtinguiſhing mercy between me and the beaſts that periſh, might move and melt my heart into thankfulneſs! O that I might conſider ſeriouſly what the higher and more excellent end of my Creation is, and might more endeavour to anſwer and live up to it! Or elſe (O my ſoul) it will be worſe with thee than with the beaſts. 'Tis true, they are under bondage and miſery; but it is but for a little time, death will end all their

their pains, and eaſe them of all their heavy loads; but I ſhall groan to all eternity, under a heavier burden than ever they felt; they have no account to give but ſo have I. What comfort is it that I have a larger capacity than a beaſt hath? that God hath endowed me with reaſon, which is denied to me? Alas! this will but augment my miſery, and enlarge me to take in a greater meaſure of anguiſh.

2. A Reflection for an elect ſoul.

But how many ſteps (O my ſoul) mayeſt thou aſcend in the praiſes of thy God, when thou conſidereſt the mercies that God hath beſtowed upon thee! not only in that he made thee, not a ſtone or tree without ſenſe, or an horſe, or dog without reaſon; but that thou art not an infidel without light, or an unregenerate perſon without grace. What! to have ſenſe, and all the delights of it, which ſtones have not; reaſon, with the more high and noble pleaſures of it, which beaſts have not; the light and knowledge of the great things of the Goſpel, which the Heathens have not; and ſuch an expectation and hope of unconceivable glory and felicity, which the unſanctified have not. O my ſoul! how rich! how bountiful hath thy God been to thee! theſe are the overflowings of his love to thee, who waſt moulded out of the ſame lump with the *beaſts*, that *groan* on earth, yea with the *damned* that *howl* in hell; well may I ſay, that God hath been a good God to me.

The *Poem.*

WHen I behold a tyred Jade put on
With whip and ſpur; till all his ſtrength be gone.
See ſtreams of ſweat run down his bleeding ſides,
How little mercy's ſhewn by him that rides.
If I more thankleſs to my God don't prove,
Than ſuch a Rider's mercileſs, 'twill move
My ſoul to praiſe, for who ſees this, and can
But bleſs the Lord, that he was made a man.

And ſuch a ſight the Rider ought to move,
This Meditation duly to improve.
What hath this creature done, that he ſhould be
Thus beaten, wounded, and tyr'd out by me?
He is my fellow-creature, 'tis meer grace;
I had not been in his, he in my caſe.
Ungrateful, ſtupid man; God might have made
Me bear the ſaddle, as I ſee this Jade.
He never ſin'd, but for my ſin doth lye
Subjected unto all this miſery.
Lord, make my heart relent; that I ſhould be
To thee more uſeleſs, than my horſe to me.
He did his utmoſt, went as long as ever
His legs could bear him: but for me I never
Thus ſpent my ſtrength for God; but oft have bin
Too prodigal thereof, in wayes of ſin;
Though he's the horſe and I the man; 'twill be
Far better with my horſe, one day than me:
Unleſs thy grace prevent, and ſuper-add
A new Creation; unto that I had.
Could ev'ry Rider fix a ſerious thought
On ſuch a ſubject, and hereby he taught
To ſpiritualize it, and improve it thus;
How ſweet, would tedious journeys be to us?
But ſuch a task, a graceleſs heart dogs out
More than the tyred horſe, I write about.

CHAP. III.

Upon the ſeeking of loſt Cattel.

When ſeeking your loſt Cattel, keep in mind
That thus Chriſt Jeſus ſeeks, your ſouls to find.

OBSERVATION.

WHen Cattel are ſtrayed away from your fields, you uſe all care and diligence to recover them again, tracing

tracing their footſteps, crying them in Market-Towns, ſending your ſervants abroad, and inquiring your ſelves of all that you think can give news of them. What care and pains men will take in ſuch caſes, was exemplified in *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 9. 4,5. who with his ſervant paſſed through *Mount Ephraim*, to ſeek the Aſſes that were ſtrayed from his father, and through the Land of *Shaliſha*, and through the Land of *Shalim*, and they were not there, and through the Land of the *Benjamites*, but found them not.

APPLICATION.

THe care and pains you take to recover your loſt cattel, carries a ſweet and lively repreſentation of the love of *Jeſus Chriſt*, in the recovery of loſt ſinners. *Jeſus Chriſt* came on purpoſe from heaven upon a like errand, to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt, *Mat.* 18. 11. There are ſeveral particulars in which this glorious deſign of Chriſt, in ſeeking and ſaving loſt man, and the care and pains of Husbandmen in recovering their loſt cattel, do meet and touch, though there be as many particulars alſo in which they differ; all which I ſhall open under the following heads.

We ſometimes find that cattel will break out of thoſe very fields where they have been bred, and where they want nothing, that is needful for them. Juſt thus, loſt man departed from his God, brake out of that pleaſant encloſure where he was abundantly provided for, both as to ſoul and body; yet then he brake over the hedge of the command, and went aſtray, *Eccleſ.* 7. 29. *Lo this only have I found, that God made man upright, but he ſought out to himſelf many inventions.* He was not content and ſatisfied with that bleſſed ſtate God had put him into, but would be trying new concluſions to the loſs and ruin, both of himſelf and his poſterity. 1.

Strayers are evermore ſufferers for it; all they get by it, is to be pinned and pounded; and what did man get by departing from his God, but ruin and miſery to ſoul and body? Will you have an abreviate of his ſufferings and loſſes? (the full account none can give you) why, by ſtraying from his 2.

God, he loſt the rectitude and holineſs of his nature; (like a true ſtrayer) he is all dirty and miry, overſpread and beſmeared both in ſoul and body, with the odious filthineſs of ſin; he loſt the liberty and freedom of his will to good; a precious jewel of ineſtimable value: This is a real miſery incurr'd by the fall, though ſome have ſo far loſt their underſtandings and humility, as not to own it; he hath loſt his God, his ſoul, his happineſs, and his very bowels of compaſſion towards himſelf in this miſerable ſtate.

3. When your cattel are ſtrayed, yea, though it be but one of the Flock or Herd, you leave all the reſt, and go after that which is loſt: So did *Jeſus Chriſt*, who in the fore-cited place, *Mat.* 18. 12. compares himſelf to ſuch a Shepherd; he left heaven it ſelf, and all the bleſſed *Angels* there, to come into this world to ſeek loſt man. O the precious eſteem, and dear love that Chriſt had to poor man! How did his bowels yearn towards us in our loſt ſtate! How did he pity us in our miſery! As if he had ſaid, Poor creatures, they have loſt themſelves, and are become a prey to the devil, in a periſhing ſtate; I will ſeek after them, and ſave them. The Son of man is come to ſeek and to ſave.

4. You are glad when you have found your ſtrayers; much more is Chriſt, when he hath found a loſt ſoul. O 'tis a great ſatisfaction to him to ſee the fruit of the travel of his ſoul, Iſa. 53. *Yea, there is more joy in heaven over one ſinner that repenteth, than ninety nine juſt perſons that need no repentance.* What demonſtrations of joy and gladneſs did the father of the Prodigal give, when he found his Son that was loſt, *Luke* 15. 20.

5. When you have brought home your ſtrayers, you ſometimes clog them, to prevent their wandring again, and ſtop up the gaps with thorns; and ſo doth God oftentimes by ſuch ſouls as are recovered and brought home to Chriſt; he hangs a clog of affliction to prevent their departure from God again, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7.

But then there are five particulars in which Chriſt ſeeking loſt ſouls, and your ſeeking loſt cattel differ.

1. Your cattel ſometimes find the way home themſelves, and re-

return to you of their own accord; but loſt man never did, nor can do ſo; he was his own deſtroyer, but can never be his own Saviour; it was impoſſible for him to have loſt his God, but having once loſt him, can never find him again of himſelf. Alas! his heart is bent to backſliding, he hath no will to return. Hear how Chriſt complains, *Joh.* 5. 40. *Ye will not come unto me.* Mans recovery begins in God, not in himſelf.

Your ſervants can find, and bring back your loſt cattel as well as you; but ſo cannot Chriſts ſervants. Miniſters may *diſcover*, but cannot *recover* them; they daily *ſee*, but cannot *ſave* them; *lament* them they can, but *help* them they cannot; *intreat* and beg them to return they can and do, but *prevail* with them they cannot. *Melancthon* thought when he began to preach, to perſwade all; but old *Adam* was too hard for young *Melancthon*. 2.

You ſeek all the cattel that are ſtrayed from you, eſpecially the beſt; but *Jeſus Chriſt* only ſeeks poor loſt man. There were other creatures, and ſuch as by nature were more excellent, that loſt their God and themſelves; I mean, the *Apoſtate Angels*; but he came not to ſeek them: Herein his ſingular love to man appears. 3.

When you have recovered and brought home your loſt cattel, you may loſe them the ſecond time, and never recover them again; but ſo cannot Chriſt. Man once recovered, is for ever ſecured by him. *All that thou haſt given me I have kept, and not one of them is loſt, but the ſon of perdition*; and he was never ſavingly found, *Joh.* 17. 12. 4.

Though you prize your cattel, yet you will not venture your life for the recovery of them; rather let them go than regain them with ſuch an hazard; but *Jeſus Chriſt* not only ventured, but actually laid down his life to recover, and ſave loſt man: He redeemed them at the price of his own blood; he is that good Shepherd that laid down his life for the Sheep. O the ſurpaſſing love of Chriſt to loſt ſouls! 5.

RE-

REFLECTIONS.

1. A Reflection for a loſt ſoul.

LOrd, I am a loſt creature, an undone ſoul; and herein lyes my miſery, that I have not only loſt my God, but have no heart to return to him! Nay, I fly from Chriſt, who is come on purpoſe from heaven to ſeek and to ſave me; his Meſſengers are abroad ſeeking for ſuch as I am, but I avoid them, or at leaſt refuſe to obey their call and perſwaſions to return. Ah, what a miſerable ſtate am I in! every ſtep I go is a ſtep towards hell; my ſoul, with the Prodigal is ready to periſh in a ſtrange Countrey! but I have no mind with him to return home; wretched ſoul, what will the end of this be? If God have loſt thee, the Devil hath found thee; he takes up all ſtrayers from God: yea, death, and hell will ſhortly find thee, if *Chriſt* do not; and then thy recovery (O my ſoul!) will be impoſſible. Why ſit I here periſhing and dying! I am not yet as irrecoverably loſt as the damned are. O let me delay no longer, leſt I be loſt for ever!

2. A Reflection for one that was loſt, but is found.

O my ſoul! for ever bleſs and admire the love of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who came from heaven to ſeek and ſave, ſuch a loſt ſoul as I was. Lord, how marvellous, how matchleſs is thy love! I was loſt, and am found. I am found, and did not ſeek; nay, I am found by him from whom I fled. Thy love, O my Saviour! was a preventing love, a wonderful love; thou lovedſt me much more than I loved my ſelf; I was cruel to my own ſoul, but thou waſt kind; thou ſoughteſt for me, a loſt ſinner, and not for loſt *Angels*; thy hand of grace caught hold of me, and hath let go thouſands, and ten thouſands, as good as my ſelf by nature. Like another *David*, thou didſt reſcue my poor loſt ſoul out of the mouth of the deſtroyer; yea, more than ſo, thou diſt loſe thine own life to find mine: And now, dear *Jeſus*, ſince I am thus marvellouſly recovered, ſhall I ever ſtraggle again from thee? O, let it for ever be a warning to me, how I turn aſide into by-paths of ſin any more!

The

The *Poem.*

WHen cattel from your fields are gone astray,
and you to seek them through the Country ride;
Enquiring for them all along the way;
tracking their foot-steps, where they turn'd aside. 1 Sam. 9. 4, 5.

One servant this way sent, another that;
searching the fields, and countrey round about:
This meditation now falls in so pat;
as if God sent it to enquire you out.

My beasts are lost, and so am (1) I by sin; (1) Luk. 15. 32.
my wretched soul from God thus wandring went,
And I seek them, so was (2) I sought by him (2) Mat. 18. 11.
who from the (3) fathers bosom forth was sent. (3) John 1. 18.

Pursu'd by Sermons, follow'd close by grace;
and strong convictions Christ hath sought for me,
Yea though I (4) shun him still he gives me chase, (4) John 5 40.
as if resolv'd I should not damned be.

When (5) Angels lost themselves it was not so,
God did not seek, or once for them enquire; (5) Heb. 2. 16.
But said, let these Apostate creatures go,
I'le plague them for it (6) with eternal fire. (6) Jude 6.

Lord, what am (7) I, that thou shouldst set thine eyes (7) 1 Cor. 1. 27.
and still seek after such a wretch as I?
Whose matchless mercy, and rich grace (8) despise, (8) Psa. 68. 18.
as if in spight thereof resolv'd to die.

Why should I shun thee, blessed Saviour, why
should I avoid thee thus? thou dost not chase
My soul to (9) slay it; O that ever I (9) Luk. 9. 56.
should fly a Saviour that's so full of grace!

Long

Long haſt thou ſought me, Lord, I now return;
O let thy bowels of compaſſion ſound,
For my departure, I ſincerely mourn;
and let this day, thy wandring ſheep be found.

CHAP. IV.

Upon the feeding of fat Cattel.

Fat beaſts you kill, the lean you uſe to ſave
God's diſpenſations, ſome ſuch meaning have.

OBSERVATION.

IT is a good Obſervation of a Father, and well applied; *Vituli triturantes quotidie ligantur, vituli mactandi quotidie in paſcuis libere relinquntur.* Oxen for uſe are daily yoaked and kept ſhort, whilſt thoſe that are deſigned for the ſhambles, are let looſe in green paſtures, to feed at pleaſure. Store beaſts fare hard, and are kept lean and low; feeding beaſts are excuſed from the yoak, whilſt others are laboured and wrought hard every day; the one hath more than he can eat, the other would eat more if he had it.

APPLICATION.

THus deals the Lord oft-times with his own elect, whom he deſigns for glory; and with the wicked, who are preparing for the day of wrath. Thus are they filled with earthly proſperity, and creature-enjoyments, like reſty and wanton beaſts turned out at liberty in a fat paſture, whilſt poor Saints are kept hard and ſhort, *Amos* 1. 4. *Hear this word ye kine of* Baſhan, *that are in the mountains of* Samaria, *which oppreſs the poor, and cruſh the needy.* Theſe metaphorical kine are the proſperous oppreſſors of the world, full fed, and wanton wicked men. 'Tis true, heaven hath not all the poor, not

nor hell all the rich; but its a very common diſpenſation of providence, to beſtow moſt of the things of this world upon them that have no portion in heaven; and to keep them ſhort on earth, for whom that kingdom is provided. Let me draw forth the ſimilitude in a few particulars.

The beaſts of ſlaughter have the fatteſt paſtures; ſo have the ungodly in the world; *Their eyes ſtand out with fatneſs, they have more than heart could wiſh*, Pſal. 73.7. their hearts are as fat as *greaſe*, Pſal. 119.70. Theſe be they that fleet off the cream of earthly enjoyments, *whoſe bellies are filled with hidden treaſures*, Pſal. 17.14. *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked*, Job 9.24. O, what full eſtates? what an affluence of earthly delights hath God caſt in upon ſome wicked men? there is much *wantonneſs*, but no want in their dwellings: Some that now know not which way to turn themſelves in hell, once knew not where to beſtow their goods on earth. 1.

Feeding beaſts grow wanton in their full paſtures; there you ſhall ſee them tumble and friſk? and kick up their heels. The ſame effect hath the proſperity of the wicked, it makes them wanton; their life is but a diverſion from one pleaſure to another, *Job* 21.11,12,13. *They ſend forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance; they take the timbrel, and harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ; they ſpend their dayes in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.* The ſame character doth the Prophet *Amos* give of them, *Amos* 6.4,5,6. *They ſtretch themſelves upon beds of Ivory, drink Wine in bowls*, &c. and no ſorrow goes to their hearts. Theſe are they that live in pleaſures upon earth, as a fiſh in the water, *Jam.* 5.5. 2.

Theſe fat paſtures do but the ſooner haſten the death of theſe cattle; the ſooner they are fatted, the ſooner they are ſlaughtered; and the proſperity of the wicked ſerves to the ſame end. The proſperity of fools ſhall deſtroy them (*i.e.*) it ſhall be the means and inſtrument of heating and hightening their luſts, and thereby fitting them for deſtruction; their proſperity is food and fewel to their corruptions. Many wicked men had not been ſo ſoon ripe for hell, had they not grown in the Sun-ſhine of proſperity. 3.

4. Fatted beasts do not in the least understand the intent and meaning of the Husbandman, in allowing them such large and fat pastures, which he denyes to his other cattle; and as little as beasts, do wicked men understand the scope and end of Gods providences, in casting prosperity and wealth upon them; little do they think their tables are a snare, a gin, and a trap for their souls; they only (like beasts) mind what is before them, but do not at all understand the tendency and end of these their sensual delights.

5. Though the Husbandman keep his store cattel in short commons, yet he intends to preserve them; these shall remain with him, when the others are driven to the slaughter. Such a design of preservation is carried on in all those outward straits, wants and hardships which the Lord exposes his people to. I confess, such dispensations, for present, are very stumbling and puzling things, even to gracious and wise persons. To see wicked men, not only exempted from their troubles, but even oppressed with prosperity; to see a godly man in wants and straits, and a wicked man have more than his heart can wish, is a case that poses the wisest Christian, till he consider the designs and issues of both those providences, and then he acquiesces in the wisdom of God so ordering it, *Psal.* 73. 5, 14, 18, 23.

REFLECTIONS.

1. A Reflection for a voluptuous worldling. DOth my prosperity fat me up for hell, and prepare me for the day of slaughter? little cause have I then to glory in it, and lift up my heart upon these things. Indeed, God hath given, (I cannot say blessed me with) a fulness of creature-enjoyments; upon these my carnal heart seizeth greedily and securely, not at all suspecting a snare lying in these things, for the ruin of my soul. What are all these charming pleasures, but so many rattles to quiet my soul, whilst its damnation steals insensibly upon it? What are all my businesses and imployments in the world, but so many diversions from the business of life? There are but two differences betwixt me, and the poorest slave the devil hath on earth;

earth; ſuch are whipt on to hell by outward miſeries, and I am coached to hell in a little more pomp and honour; theſe will have a leſs, and I a greater account in the day of reckoning. O that I had never known proſperity! I am now tumbling in a green paſture, and ſhortly ſhall be hanging up in the ſhambles in hell; if this be the beſt fruit of my proſperity, if I were taken captive by cruel *Canibals*, and fed with the richeſt fare, but withal underſtood, that the deſign of it were, to fat me up like a beaſt for them to feed upon; how little ſtomack ſhould I have to their dainties? O my ſoul! it were much better for thee to have a ſanctified poverty, which is the portion of many Saints, than an enſnaring proſperity, ſet as a trap to ruin thee for ever.

2. A Reflection for a poor Chriſtian.

The wiſdom of my God hath allotted me but ſhort commons here, his providence feeds me, but from hand to mouth; but I am (and well may be) contented with my preſent ſtate; that which ſweetens it, is, that I am one of the Lords preſerved. How much better is a morſel of bread, and a draught of water here, with an expectancy of glory hereafter, than a fat paſture given in, and fitting for the wrath to come? Well, ſince the caſe ſtands thus, bleſſed be God for my preſent lot; though I have but little in hand, I have much in hope; my preſent troubles will ſerve to ſweeten my future joyes? and the ſorrows of this life will give a luſtre to the glory of the next; that which is now hard to ſuffer, will then be ſweet to remember; my ſongs then will be louder than my groans now.

The *POEM.*

THoſe beaſts which for the ſhambles are deſign'd,
In fragrant flowry Meadows you ſhall find;
Where they abound with rich and plenteous fare;
Whilſt others graze in commons thin and bare,

Thoſe live a ſhort and pleaſant life; but theſe
Protract their lives, in dry, and ſhorter leas.
(1) Job 21.13. Thus live the wicked, (1) thus they do abound,
With earthly glory, and with honour crown'd.
Their lofty heads unto the ſtars aſpire,
And radiant beams, their ſhining brows attire.
(2) Job 21.13. The (2) fatteſt portion's ſerv'd up in their diſh,
(3) ibid. Yea (3) they have more than their own hearts can wiſh.
(4) Jam. 4.5. Diſſolv'd in (4) pleaſures, crown'd with buds of *May*;
They for a time, in theſe fat paſtures play;
Friſk, dance and leap, like full fed beaſts; and even
(5) Pſal. 73.9. Turn up their (5) wanton heels againſt the heaven.
Not underſtanding that this pleaſant life
Serves but to fit them for the Butchers kniſe.
In fragrant Meads, they tumbling are to day,
(6) Job 11.13. To morrow to the (6) ſlaughter led away.
Their pleaſure's gone, and vaniſh'd like a bubble
(7) Rev. 18. 7. Which makes their future torments on them (7) double.
(8) Jam. 2. 5. Mean while, Gods little flock is (8) poor and lean;
Becauſe the Lord did ner'e intend, or mean
This for their portion: and beſides doth know
(9) ibid. Their ſouls (9) prove beſt, where ſhorteſt graſs doth grow.
Cheer up poor flock although your fare be thin
Yet here is ſomething to take comfort in:
You here ſecurely feed, and need not fear
Th'infernal butcher can't approach you here.
'Tis ſomewhat that, but O, which far tranſcends!
Your glorious Shepher'ds coming; who intends
To lead you hence, unto that fragrant hill
(1) Pſal. 17.15. Where with green paſtures he his flocks will (1) fill.
On which he from celeſtial caſements pours
The ſweeteſt dews, and conſtant gracious ſhowres.
Along whoſe banks, rivers of pleaſures ſlide
There his bleſs'd flocks, for ever ſhall abide.
O envy not the worldlings preſent joys
Which to your future mercies are but toyes.
Their paſture now is green, your's dry, and burn'd:
(2) Iſa. 65.13, 14. But then the (2) Scene is chang'd, the tables turn'd.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Good Husbands labour for poſterity,
To after ages; Saints muſt have an eye.

Upon the husbandmans care for poſterity.

OBSERVATION.

PRovident and careful Husbandmen do not only labour to ſupply their own neceſſities while living, but to lay up ſomething for their poſterity when they are gone; they do not only leave to their children what their progenitors left them, but they deſire to leave it improved and bettered. None but bad husbands and ſpend-thrifts are of the mind with that *Heathen Emperor Tiberius*, who having put all into ſuch confuſions in the *Empire*, that it might be thought the world would end with him; yet pleaſed himſelf with this apprehenſion, that he ſhould be out of the reach of it; and would often ſay, When I am dead, let heaven and earth mingle; if the world will but hold my time, let it break when I am gone: But provident men look beyond their own time, and do very much concern themſelves in the good or evil of their poſterity.

APPLICATION.

VVHat careful Husbands do, with reſpect to the proviſions they make for their children, that all prudent Chriſtians are bound to do, with reſpect to the truths committed to them, and by them, to be tranſmitted to ſucceeding Saints.

In the firſt ages of the world, even till the Law was given, faithful men were inſtead of books and records; they did by oral tradition convey the truths of God to poſterity; but ſince the ſacred truth hath been conſigned to writing, no ſuch

tradi-

tion (except full conſentient with that written word) is to be received as authentick; but the truths therein delivered to the Saints, are by verbal declarations, open confeſſions, and conſtant ſufferings, to be preſerved and delivered from age to age. This was the conſtant care of the whole cloud of witneſſes, both ancient and modern, who have kept the word of Gods patience, and would not accept their own lives, liberties or eſtates; no, nor the whole world in exchange, for that invaluable treaſure of truth; they have carefully practiſed *Solomons* counſel, *Prov.* 23. 23. *Buy the truth, but ſell it not*; they would not alienate that fair inheritance, for all the inheritances on earth. Upon the ſame reaſons, that you refuſe to part with, or embezel your eſtates, Chriſtians alſo refuſe to part with the truths of God.

1. You will not waſte or alienate your inheritance, becauſe it's precious and of great value in your eyes; but much more precious, are Gods truths to his people. *Luther* profeſſed, he would not take the whole world for one leaf of his Bible. Though ſome profane perſons may ſay with *Pilate*, What is truth? yet know, that any one truth of the Goſpel, is more worth, than all the inheritances upon earth; they are the great things of Gods Law, and he that ſells them for the greateſt things in this world, makes a ſoul-undoing bargain.

2. You will not waſte or part with your inheritance, becauſe you know your poſterity will be much wronged by it. They that baffle or drink away an eſtate, drink the tears of their ſad widows, and the very blood of their impoveriſhed children. The people of God do alſo conſider, how much the generations to come are concern'd in the conſervation of the truths of God for them; it cuts them to the heart, but to think, that their children ſhould be brought up to worſhip dumb idols, and fall down before a wooden or a breaden God. The very birds and beaſts will expoſe their own bodies to apparent danger of death, to preſerve their young. Religion doth much more intender the hearts and bowels, than nature doth.

3. You reckon it a foul diſgrace to ſell your eſtates, and become Bankrupts; 'tis a word that bears ill among you: And a Chriſtian

a Chriſtian accounts it the higheſt reproach in the world, to be a traitor to, or an *Apoſtate* from the truths of God. When the primitive Saints were ſtrictly required to deliver up their Bibles, thoſe that did ſo, were juſtly branded and huſht out of their company, under the odious title of *Traditores*, or deliverers.

4. You are ſo loath to part with your eſtates, becauſe you know its hard recovering an eſtate again, when once you have loſt it. Chriſtians do alſo know, how difficult it will be for the people of God in times to come, to recover the light of the Goſpel again, if once it be extinguiſhed. There is no truth of God recovered out of *Antichriſts* hands, without great wreſtlings, and much blood. The Church may call every point of reformed doctrine and diſcipline ſo recovered, her *Naphtalies*; for with great wreſtlings, ſhe hath wreſtled for them. *Earneſtly contending for the faith, once delivered to them*, Jude 3.

5. To conclude, rather than you will part with your eſtates, you will chuſe to ſuffer many wants and hardſhips all your lives; you will fare hard, and go bare, to preſerve what you have for your poſterity: But the people of God have put themſelves upon far greater hardſhips than theſe, to preſerve truth; they have choſen to ſuffer reproaches, poverty, priſons, death, and the moſt cruel torments, rather than the loſs of Gods truth. All the *Martyrologies* will inform you, what their ſufferings have been, to keep the word of Gods patience; they have boldly told their enemies, that they might pluck their hearts out of their bodies, but ſhould never pluck the truth out of their hearts.

REFLECTIONS.

1. A Reflection for cowardly and faint-hearted Profeſſors.

BAſe unbelieving heart! how have I flinched and ſhrunk from truth when it hath been in danger? I have rather choſen to leave it, than my life, liberty or eſtate, as a prey to the enemy. I have left truth, and juſt it is, that the God of truth ſhould leave me. Cowardly ſoul, that durſt not make a ſtand for truth! yea, rather bold and daring ſoul, that

that wouldſt rather venture to look a wrathful God, than an angry man in the face. I would not own and preſerve the truth, and the God of truth will not own me, 2 *Tim.* 2.12. *If we deny him, he will deny us.*

2. A Reflection for ſuch as ſuffer for truth.

Lord! unto me haſt thou committed the precious treaſure and truſt of truth; and as I received it, ſo do I deſire to deliver it to the generations to come, that the people which are yet unborn, may praiſe the Lord. God forbid I ſhould ever part with ſuch a fair inheritance, and thereby begger my own, and thouſands of ſouls! Thou haſt given me thy truth, and the world hates me, I well know that is the ground of the quarrel; would I but throw truth over the walls, how ſoon would a retreat be ſounded to all perſecutors? But Lord! thy truth is invaluably precious; what a vile thing is my blood, compared with the leaſt of all thy truths? Thou haſt charged me not to ſell it, and in thy ſtrength I reſolve never to lift a fine, and cut off that golden line, whereby thy truths are entailed upon thy people, from generation to generation: My friends may go, my liberty go, my blood may go; but as for thee, precious truth, thou ſhalt never go.

3. A Reflection for ſuch as are in quiet poſſeſſion of truth.

How dear hath this inheritance of truth coſt ſome Chriſtians? how little hath it coſt us? We are entred into their labours; we reap in peace, what they ſowed in tears; yea, in blood. O the grievous ſufferings that they choſe to endure! rather than to deprive us of ſuch an inheritance, thoſe noble ſouls, heated with the love of Chriſt, and care for our ſouls, made many bold and brave adventures for it; and yet at what a low rate do we value, what coſt them ſo dear? like young heirs, that never knew the getting of an eſtate, we ſpend it freely. Lord, help us thankfully and diligently to improve thy truths, while we are in quiet poſſeſſion of them. Such intervals of peace and reſt, are uſually of no long continuance with thy people.

The *Poem.*

A Publick ſpirit ſcorns to plant no root
But ſuch from which himſelf may gather fruit.
For thus he reaſons, if I reap the gains
Of my Laborious predeceſſors pains;
How equal is it, that poſterity
Should reap the fruits of preſent induſtry?
Should every age but ſerve its turn, and take
No thought for future times? it ſoon would make
A Bankrupt world, and ſo entail a curſe
From age to age, as it grows worſe and worſe.
Our Chriſtian predeceſſors careful thus
Have been (1) to leave an heritage to us,
Chriſts precious truths (2) conſerved in their blood,
For no leſs price thoſe truths our fathers ſtood.
They have tranſmitted, would not (3) alienate
From us their children ſuch a fair eſtate.
We eat what they did ſet, and ſhall truth fail
In our dayes? ſhall we cut off th'entail?
Or end the line of honour? nay, what's worſe
Give future ages cauſe to hate, and curſe
Our memories? like *Naboth*, may this age
Part with their blood, ſooner than heritage.
Let pity move us, let us think upon
Our (4) childrens ſouls; when we are dead, and gone.
Shall they poor ſouls, in darkneſs grope, when we
Put out the light, by which they elſe might ſee
The way to glory? yea, what's worſe? ſhall it
Be ſaid in time to come (5) Chriſt did commit
A precious treaſure, purchas'd by his blood;
To us, for ours; and for our Childrens good?
But we like cowards, falſe, perfidious men;
For carnal eaſe, loſt it, our ſelves, and them.
O let us leave to after ages more,
Than we receiv'd from all that went before.
That thoſe to come may bleſs the Lord, and keep
Our names alive, when we in duſt ſhall ſleep.

(1) Rev. 3. 10.
(2) Rev. 12. 11.
(3) Heb. 11. 37.
1 King. 21. 2.
(4) Pſ. 102. 18.
(5) Jude 3.

CHAP. VI.

Upon the Husbandmans care to prove and preserve his Deeds.

Deeds for your Lands you prove, and keep with care;
O that for heaven you but as careful were.

OBSERVATION.

WE generally find, men are not more careful in trying gold, or in keeping it, than they are in examining their Deeds, and preserving them; these are virtually their whole estate, and therefore it concerns them to be careful of them: If they suspect a flaw in their Lease or Deed, they repair to the ablest Counsell, submit it to his judgment, make the worst of their cause, and query about all the supposeable dangers with him; if he tell them their case is suspicious and hazardous, how much are they perplexed and troubled? they can neither eat, drink, or sleep in peace, till they have a good settlement; and willing they are to be at much cost and pains to obtain it.

APPLICATION.

THese cares and fears, with which you are perplexed in such cases, may give you a little glimpse of those troubles of soul, with which the people of God are perplexed about their eternal condition, which perhaps you have been hitherto unacquainted with, and therefore slighted them, as phansies and whimsies. I say, your own fears and troubles, if ever you were ingaged by a cunning and powerful adversary in a Law-suit for your estate, may give you a little glimpse of spiritual troubles; and indeed it is no more but a glimpse of it: For, as the loss of an earthly (though fair) inheritance is but a trifle to the loss of God, and the soul to eternity; so you cannot but imagine, that the cares, fears, and solicitudes

ſolicitudes of ſouls about theſe things, are much, very much beyond yours. Let us compare the caſes, and ſee how they anſwer to each other.

1. You have evidences for your eſtates, and by them you hold what you have in the world. They alſo have evidences for their eſtate in Chriſt, and glory to come; they hold all *in capite*, by vertue of their intermarriage with Jeſus Chriſt; they come to be enſtated in that glorious inheritance, contained in the Covenant of grace. You have their tenure in that Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. All is yours, for ye are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods. Faith unites them to him; and after they believe, they are ſealed by the Spirit of promiſe, *Eph.* 1. 13. They can lay claim to no promiſe upon any other ground; this is their title to all that they own as theirs.

2. It often falls out, that after the ſealing and executing of your Deeds or Leaſes, an adverſary finds ſome dubious clauſe in them, and thereupon commences a Suit of Law with you. Thus it frequently falls out with the people of God, who after their believing and ſealing time, have doubts and ſcruples raiſed in them about their title. Nothing is more common, than for the devil and their own unbelief to ſtart controverſies, and raiſe ſtrong objections againſt their intereſt in Chriſt, and the Covenant of promiſes. Theſe are cunning and potent adverſaries, and do maintain long debates with the gracious ſoul, and reaſon ſo cunningly and ſophiſtically with it, that it can by no means extricate and ſatisfie it ſelf; alwayes alledging, that their title is worth nothing, which they poor ſouls are but to apt too ſuſpect.

3. All the while that a Suit in Law is depending about your title, you have but little comfort or benefit from your eſtate; you cannot look upon it as your own, nor lay out moneys in building or dreſſing, for fear you ſhould loſe all at laſt. Juſt thus ſtands the caſe with doubting Chriſtians, they have little comfort from the moſt comfortable promiſes, little benefit from the ſweeteſt duties and Ordinances; they put off their own comforts, and ſay, If we were ſure, that all this were ours, we could then rejoyce in them: But alas! our title is dubious, Chriſt is a precious Chriſt, the promiſes are com-

fortable things, but what if they be none of ours? Ah! how little doth the doubting Christian make of his large and rich inheritance?

4. You dare not trust your own judgments in such cases, but state your case to such as are learned in the Laws; and are willing to get the ablest counsel you can to advise you: So are poor doubting Christians, they carry their Cases from Christian to Christian, and from Minister to Minister, with such requests as these; Pray tell me, what do you think of my condition? deal plainly and faithfully with me; these be my grounds of doubting, and these my grounds of hope. O hide nothing from me! And if they all agree that their case is good, yet they cannot be satisfied till God say so too, and confirm the word of his servants; and therefore they carry the case often before him, in such words as those, *Psal.* 139. 23, 24. *Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any way of wickedness in me.*

5. You have little quiet in your spirits, till the Case be resolved, your meat and drink doth you little good; you cannot sleep in the night, because these troubled thoughts are ever returning upon you: What if I should be turn'd out of all at last? So it is with gracious souls, their eyes are held waking in the night, by reason of the troubles of their hearts, *Psal.* 77. 4. Such fears as these are frequently returning upon their hearts. What if I should be found a self-deceiver at last? What if I do but hug a phantasm instead of Christ? how can this, or that, consist with grace? Their meat and drink doth them little good; their bodies are often macerated, by the troubles of their souls.

6. You will not make the best of your condition, when you state your case to a faithful Councellor; neither will they, but oft-times (poor pensive souls) they make it much worse than indeed it is; charge themselves with that which God never charged them with, though this be neither their wisdom, nor their duty; but the fears of miscarrying make them suspect fraud, in all they do or have.

7. Lastly, when your title is cleared, your hearts are eased; yea,

yea, not only eaſed, but overjoyed; though not in that degree, nor with the ſame kind of joy, that the hearts of Chriſtians are overflowed, when the Lord ſpeaks peace to their ſouls. O welcome the ſweet morning light, after a tedious night of darkneſs; now they can eat their bread with comfort, and drink their wine (yea if it be but water) with a merry heart, *Eccleſ.* 9. 7.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The careleſs ſouls reflection

O How hath my ſpirit been toſſed and hurried, when I have met with troubles and clamours about my eſtate! but as for ſpiritual troubles, and thoſe ſoul-perplexing caſes that chriſtians ſpeak of, I underſtand but little of them. I never called my everlaſting ſtate in queſtion, nor brake an hours ſleep upon any ſuch account. Ah, my ſupine and careleſs ſoul! little haſt thou regarded how matters ſtand, in reference to eternity! I have ſtrongly conceited, but never throughly examined, the validity of my title to Chriſt and his promiſes; nor am I able to tell, if my own conſcience ſhould demand, whereupon my claim is grounded!

O my ſoul! why art thou ſo unwilling to examine how matters ſtand betwixt God and thee? art thou afraid to look into thy condition? leaſt by *finding* thine *hypocriſie*, thou ſhouldeſt *loſe* thy *peace*; or rather thy ſecurity. To what purpoſe will it be to ſhut thine eyes againſt the light of conviction, unleſs thou couldſt alſo find out a way to prevent thy *condemnation*? Thou ſeeſt other ſouls, how attentively they wait under the word, for any thing that may ſpeak to their conditions. Doubtleſs thou haſt heard, how frequently and ſeriouſly they have ſtated their conditions, and opened their caſes to the Miniſters of Chriſt. But thou, O my ſoul! haſt no ſuch caſes to put, no doubts to be reſolved; thou wilt leave all to the deciſion of the great day, and not trouble thy ſelf about it now. Well, God will decide it, but little to thy comfort.

2. The doubting ſouls reflection

I have heard how ſome have been perplexed by litigious adverſaries, but I believe none have been ſo toſſed with fears,

ſears, and diſtracted with doubts, as I have been about the ſtate of my ſoul. Lord, what ſhall I do? I have often carried my doubts and ſcruples to thine Ordinances, waiting for ſatisfaction to be ſpoken there. I have carried them to thoſe I have judged skilfull and faithful, begging their reſolution and help, but nothing will ſtick. Still my ſears are daily renewed. O my God do thou decide my caſe! tell me how the ſtate ſtands betwixt thee and me; my dayes conſume in trouble, I can neither do, or enjoy any good, whilſt things are thus with me; all my earthly enjoyments are dry and uncomfortable things; yea, which is much worſe, all my duties and thine Ordinances prove ſo too, by reaſon of the troubles of my heart! I am no ornament to my profeſſion, nay, I am a diſcouragement and ſtumbling-block to others! I will hearken and hear what God the Lord will ſpeak, O that it might be peace! if thou do not ſpeak it none can; and when thou doeſt, keep thy ſervant from returning again to folly, leſt I make freſh work for an accuſing conſcience, and give new matter to the adverſary of my ſoul!

3. The aſſured Chriſtians Reflection.

But thou, (my ſoul) enjoyeſt a double mercy from thy bountiful God, who hath not only given thee a ſound title, but alſo the clear evidence and knowledge thereof. I am gathering, and daily feeding upon the full ripe fruits of aſſurance, which grow upon the top boughs of faith, whilſt many of my poor brethren drink their own tears, and have their teeth broken with gravel ſtones. Lord, thou haſt ſet my ſoul upon her high places, but let me not exalt my ſelf, becauſe thou haſt exalted me; nor grow wanton becauſe I walk at liberty, leſt for the abuſe of ſuch precious liberty, thou clap my old chains upon me, and ſhut up my ſoul again in priſon.

The Poem.

MEn can't be quiet till they be aſſur'd
That their eſtate is good, and well ſecur'd.
To able Counſel they their Deed ſubmit
Intreating them with care t'examine it

Fearing

Fearing some clause an enemy may wrest,
Or find a flaw; whereby he may devest
Them, and their children. O who can but see
How wise men in their generation be! Luke 16.8.
But do they (1) equal cares and fears express (1) Act. 18.17.
About their everlasting happiness?
In spiritual things 'twould grieve ones heart to see
What (2) careless fools, these careful men can be. (2) Isa. 32.9. 10,11.
They act like men of common sense bereaven,
Secure their Lands; and they'l trust God for heaven.
How many cases have you to submit,
To Lawyers judgments? (3) Ministers may sit (3) Hos. 11. 2.
From week to week, and yet not see the face
Of one that brings a soul concerning Case.
Yea, which is worse; how seldom do you cry
To God for counsel? (4) or beg him to try (4) Psal. 139. 23.
Your hearts; and strictest inquisition make
Into your state, discover your mistake.

O stupid souls! clouded with ignorance,
Is Christ, and heaven no (5) fair inheritance (5) phil. 3.8,9.
Compar'd with yours? or is (6) eternity (6) 2Cor. 4.18.
A shorter term than yours? that you should ply
The one so close, and totally neglect
The other; as not worth your least respect.
Perhaps the Devil whose plot from you's conceal'd,
Perswades your title's good; and firmly seal'd
By G[illegible]'s own Spirit, though you never found
One act of saving grace (7) to lay a ground (7) Eph. 1.13.
For that perswasion. Soul he hath thee fast,
Though he'l not let thee know it till the last.

Lord waken sinners, make them understand
'Twixt thee, and them; how rawly matters stand.
Give them no quiet rest, until they see
Their souls secur'd, better than Lands can be.

OCCA-

Occaſional Meditations

UPON

BIRDS, BEASTS, TREES, FLOWERS, RIVERS, and other objects.

MEDITATIONS on BIRDS.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the ſinging of a Nightingale.

WHO that hears ſuch various, raviſhing, and exquiſite melody, would imagine the bird that makes it, to be of ſo ſmall and contemptible a body, and feather? her charming voice ingaged not only mine attentive ear, but my feet alſo, to make a nearer approach to that ſhady buſh, in which that excellent Muſician ſate vailed; and the nearer I came, the ſweeter the melody ſtill ſeemed to be, but when I had deſcribed the bird her ſelf, and found her to be little bigger, and no better feather'd than a ſparrow, it gave my thoughts the occaſion of this following application.

This Bird ſeems to me the lively emblem of the formal hypocrite, (1) In that ſhe is more in ſound than ſubſtance, a loud

a loud and excellent voice, but a little deſpicable body; and it recal'd to my thoughts the ſtory of *Plutarch*, who hearing a Nightingale, deſired to have one killed to feed upon, not queſtioning but ſhe would pleaſe the pallat as well as the ear; but when the Nightingale was brought him, and he ſaw what a poor little creature it was, truly ſaid he, thou art *vox & preterea nihil*, a meer voice and nothing elſe: So is the hypocrite; did a man hear him ſometimes in more publick duties and diſcourſes, O thinks he, what an excellent man is this! what a choice and rare ſpirit is he of? but follow him home, obſerve him in his private converſation and retirements, and then you will judg *Plutarchs* note as applicable to him as the Nightingale. (2) This Bird is obſerved to charm moſt ſweetly, and ſet her ſpirits all on work, when ſhe perceives ſhe hath ingaged attention; ſo doth the hypocrite, who lives and feeds upon the applauſe and commendation of his admirers, and cares little for any of thoſe duties which bring in no returns of praiſe from men; he is little pleaſed with a ſilent melody and private pleaſure betwixt God and his own ſoul.

Scire tuum nihil eſt niſi te ſcire hoc ſciat alter:
Alas! his knowledge is not worth a pin,
If he proclaim not what he hath within.

He is more for the Theatre than the Cloſet, and of ſuch Chriſt ſaith, Verily they have their reward. (3) *Naturaliſts* obſerve the Nightingale to be an ambitious Bird, that cannot endure to be out-vied by any, ſhe will rather chuſe to die than be excell'd; a notable inſtance whereof we have in the following pleaſant Poem, tranſlated out of *Strada*, concerning the Nightingale and a Lutaniſt.

Now the declining Sun did downward bend
From higher heavens, and from his locks did ſend
A milder flame, when neer to *Tibers* flow
A Lutaniſt allayed his careful wo,

With ſounding charms, and in a greeny ſeat
Of ſhady Oak, took ſhelter from the heat
A Nightingale o'reheard him that did uſe
To ſojourn in the neighbour Groves, the muſe
That fiill'd the place, the Syrene of the wood
(Poor harmleſs Syrene) ſtealing near ſhe ſtood
Cloſe lurking in the leaves attentively
Recording that unwonted melody.
She con'd it to her ſelf, and every ſtrain
His fingers play'd, her throat return'd again.
The Lataniſt perceiv'd an anſwer ſent
From th'imitating Bird, and was content
To ſhew her play, more fully, then in haſte.
He tryes his Lute and giving her a taſt
Of the enſuing quarrel, nimbly beats
On all his ſtrings, as nimbly ſhe repeats
And wildly ranging o're a thouſand keys
Sounds a ſhrill warning of her after layes;
With rowling hand the Lutaniſt then plyes
The trembling threeds ſometimes in ſcornful wiſe
He bruſhes down the ſtrings and ſtrikes them all
With one even ſtroke, then takes them ſeveral
And culls them o're again, his ſparkling joynts
With buſie deſcant mincing on the points
Reach back again with nimble touch, then ſtayes.
The Bird replies, and art with art repays.
Sometimes as one unexpert, and in doubt
How ſhe might weild her voice, ſhe draweth out
Her tone at large, and doth at firſt prepare
A ſolemn ſtrain nor wear'd with winding air,
But with an equal pitch, and conſtant throat
Makes clear the paſſage for her gliding note;
Then croſs-diviſion diverſly ſhe playes
And loudly chanting out her quickeſt layes
Poyſes the ſound, and with a quivering voice
Falls back again: he wondring how ſo choice
So various harmony could iſſue out
From ſuch a little throat, doth go about

Some

Some harder Leſſons, and with wondrous art
Changing the ſtrings doth up the treble dart
And downward-ſmite the Baſe, with painful ſtroke
He beats; and as the Trumpet doth provoke
Sluggards to fight, even ſo his wanton skill
With mingled diſcord joyns the hoarſe and ſhrill,
The Bird this alſo tunes, and whilſt ſhe cuts
Sharp notes with melting voice, and mingled puts
Meaſures of middle ſound, then ſuddenly
She thunders deep and jugs it inwardly
With gentle murmur, clear and dull ſhe ſings
By courſe, as when the martial warning rings;
Believ't the Minſtrel bluſht, with angry mood
Inflam'd(quoth he)thou Chantreſs of the wood
Either from thee I'le bear the price away
Or vanquiſht, break my Lute without delay.
Unimitable accents then he ſtrains
His hand flyes on the ſtrings, in one he chains
Far different numbers, chaſing here and there
And all the ſtrings he labours every where;
Both flat and ſharp he ſtrikes, and ſtately grows
To prouder ſtrains, and backward as he goes
Doubly divides, and cloſing up his layes
Like a full Quire, a ſhivering conſort playes;
Then pauſing ſtood in expectation
Of his corrival, nor durſt anſwer on.
But ſhe, when practiſe long her throat had whet
Enduring not to yield, at once doth ſet
Her Spirits all to work, and all in vain;
For whilſt ſhe labours to expreſs again
With Natures ſimple voice ſuch divers keys
With ſlender pipes ſuch lofty notes as theſe
O're matcht with high deſigns, o're matcht with wo,
Juſt at the laſt encounter of her foe
She faints, ſhe dyes, falls on his inſtrument
That conquer'd her, a fitting monument.
So far even little ſouls are driven on
Struck with a vertuous emulation.

And even as far are hypocrites driven on by their ambition and pride, which is the ſpur that provokes them in their religious duties.

MEDIT. II.

Upon the ſight of many ſmall Birds chirping about a dead Hawk.

HEaring a whole quire of Birds chirping and twinking together, it ingaged my curioſity a little to enquire into the occaſion of that convocation, which mine eye quickly inform'd me of; for I perceived a dead Hawk in the buſh, about which they made ſuch a noiſe, ſeeming to triumph at the death of their enemy; and I could not blame them to ſing his knell, who like a *Cannibal* was wont to feed upon their living bodies; tearing them limb from limb, and ſcaring them with his frightful appearance. This Bird which living, was ſo formidable, being dead the pooreſt Wren or Titmouſe fears not to chirp or hop over. This brings to my thoughts the baſe and ignoble ends of the greateſt Tyrants and greedy ingroſſers of the world, of whom (whilſt living) men were more afraid than birds of a Hawk, but dead became objects of contempt and ſcorn. The death of ſuch Tyrants is both inglorious and unlamented; *When the wicked periſh, there is ſhouting*, Prov. 11. 10. Which was exemplified to the life at the death of *Nero*, of whom the Poet thus ſings,

Cum mors crudelem rapuiſſet ſæva Neronem
Credibile eſt multos Romam agitaſſe jocos.
When cruel *Nero* dy'd th' Hiſtorian tells.
How *Rome* did mourn with Bonefires, plays and bells.

Remarkable for contempt and ſhame have the ends of many bloudy Tyrants been; ſo *Pompey* the great, of whom *Claudian* the Poet ſings,

Nudus

Nudus paſcit aves jacet en qui poſſidet orbem
Exiguæ telluris inops ————
Birds eat his fleſh, lo now he cannot have
Who rul'd the world, a ſpace to make a grave.

The like is ſtoried of *Alexander* the great, who lay unburied thirty dayes, and *William* the Conquerer, with many other ſuch Birds of prey; whilſt a beneficial and holy life is uſually cloſed up in an honourable and much lamented death.

For mine own part, I wiſh I may ſoorder my converſation in the world, that I may live when I am dead in the affections of the beſt, and leave an honourable teſtimony in the conſciences of the worſt; that I may oppreſs none, do good to all, and ſay when I dye, as good *Ambroſe* did, I am neither aſhamed to live, nor afraid to dye.

MEDIT. III.

Upon the ſight of a Black-bird taking ſanctuary in a buſh from a purſuing Hawk.

WHen I ſaw how hardly the poor Bird was put to it to ſave her ſelf from her enemy, who hover'd juſt over the buſh in which ſhe was fluttering and ſqueeking, I could not but haſten to relieve her, (pity and ſuccour being a due debt to the diſtreſſed) which when I had done, the bird would not depart from the buſh, though her enemy were gone; this act of kindneſs was abundantly repaid by this Meditation, with which I returned to my walk. My ſoul, like this Bird, was once diſtreſſed, purſued, yea, ſeized by Satan, who had certainly made a prey of it, had not Jeſus Chriſt been a ſanctuary to it in that hour of danger. How ready did I find him to receive my poor ſoul into his protection? then did he make good that ſweet promiſe to my experience, Thoſe that come

come unto me, I will in no wiſe caſt out. It call'd to mind that pretty and pertinent ſtory of the Philoſopher, who walking in the fields a Bird purſued by a Hawk, flew into his boſom; he took her out, and ſaid, *Poor bird, I will neither wrong thee, nor expoſe thee to thine enemy, ſince thou cameſt unto me for refuge.* So tender, and more than ſo, is the Lord Jeſus to diſtreſſed ſouls, that come unto him. Bleſſed Jeſus! how ſhould I love and praiſe thee? glorifie and admire thee, for that great ſalvation thou haſt wrought for me. If this Bird had faln into the claws of her enemy, ſhe had been torn to pieces indeed, and devoured, but then a few minutes had diſpatcht her, and ended all her pain and miſery; but had my ſoul fallen into the hand of Satan, there had been no end of its miſery.

Would not this ſcared Bird be fluſht out of the Buſh that ſecured her, though I had chaſed away her enemy? and wilt thou (my ſoul) ever be enticed or ſcared from Chriſt thy refuge? O let this for ever ingage thee to keep cloſe to Chriſt, and make me ſay with *Ezra*; and now, O Lord! ſince thou haſt given me ſuch a deliverance as this, ſhould I again break thy commandments?

MEDIT. IV.

Upon the ſight of divers Lennets intermingling with a flock of Sparrows.

METhinks theſe Birds do fitly reſemble the gaudy Gallant, and the plain peaſants; how ſpruce and richly adorned with ſhining and various coloured feathers, (like ſcarlet, richly laid with gold and ſilver lace) are thoſe? how plainly clad, in a home-ſpun countrey ruſſet are theſe? Fine feathers (ſaith our proverb) make proud Birds; and yet the feathers of the Sparrow, are as uſeful and beneficial, both for warmth and flight, though not ſo gay and ornamental as the others; and if both were ſtript out of their feathers

thers, the Sparrow would prove the better Bird of the two; by which I ſee, that the greateſt worth doth not alwayes lye under the fineſt cloaths. And beſides, God can make mean and homely garments as uſeful and beneficial topoor deſpiſed Chriſtians, as the ruffling and ſhining garments of wanton Gallants are to them, and when God ſhall ſtrip men out of all external excellencies, theſe will be found to excel their glittering neighbours, in true worth and excellency.

Little would a man think ſuch rich treaſures of grace, wiſdom, humility, &c. lay under ſome ruſſet coats

Sæpe ſub attrita latitat ſapientia veſte.
Under poor garments more true worth may be,
Than under ſilks that whiſtle, who but he?

Whilſt on the other ſide, the heart of the wicked (as *Solomon* hath obſerved) is little worth, how much ſoever his cloaths be worth. Alas! it falls out two frequently among us, as it doth with men in the *Indies*, who walk over the rich veins of gold and ſilver Oar, which lyes hid under a ragged and barren ſurface, and know it not. For my own part, I deſire not to value any man by what is extrinſecal and worldly, but by that true internal excellency of grace, which makes the face to ſhine in the eyes of God and good men: I would contemn a vile perſon, though never ſo glorious in the eye of the world; but honour ſuch as fear the Lord, how ſordid and deſpicable ſoever to appearance.

MEDIT. V.

Upon the ſight of a Robbin-red-breaſt picking up a worm from a mole-hill then raiſing.

OBſerving the Mole working induſtriouſly beneath, and the Bird watching ſo intently above; I made a ſtand to obſerve the iſſue. When in a little time the bird deſcends and ſeizes

ſeizes upon a worm, which I perceived was crawling apace from the enemy below that hunted her, but fell to the ſhare of another which from above waited for her. My thoughts preſently ſuggeſted theſe Meditations from that occaſion; me thought this poor worm ſeem'd to be the Emblem of my poor ſoul, which is more endangered by its own luſts of pride and covetouſneſs, than this worm was by the Mole and Bird; my pride, like the aſpiring Bird watches for it above; my covetouſneſs, like this ſubterranean Mole, digging for it beneath. Poor ſoul! what a ſad Dilemma art thou brought to? If thou go down into the caverns of the earth, there thou art a prey to thy covetouſneſs that hunts thee; and if thou aſpire, or but creep upward, there thy pride waits to enſnare thee. Diſtreſſed ſoul! whither wilt thou go? aſcend thou mayeſt, not by a vain elation, but by a heavenly converſation, beſide which, there is no way for thy preſervation; the way of life is above to the wiſe, &c.

Again, I could not but obſerve the accidental benefit this poor harmleſs Bird obtained by the labour of the Mole, who hunting intentionally for her ſelf, unburroughed and ferrited out this worm for the Bird, who poſſibly was hungry enough, and could not have been relieved for this time, but by the Mole, the fruit of whoſe labours ſhe now fed upon. Even thus the Lord oft-times makes good his word to his people: *The wealth of the wicked is laid up for the juſt.* And again, *The earth ſhall help the woman.* This was fully exemplified in *David*, to whom *Nabal* that churliſh muck-worm ſpeaks all in poſſeſſives. Shall I take my bread &c. and give it to one I know not whom; and yet *David* reaps the fruit of all the pains and toyl of *Nabal* at laſt. Let it never incourage me to idleneſs, that God ſometimes gives his people the fruit of others ſweat; but if providence reduce me to neceſſity, and diſable me from helping my ſelf, I doubt not then but it will provide inſtruments to do it. The Bird was an hungry and could not dig.

MEDIT.

MEDIT. VI.

Upon the ſhooting of two Finches fighting in the Air.

HOw ſoon hath death endeed the quarrel betwixt theſe two little Combatants! had they agreed better, they might have lived longer; 'twas their own contention, that gave both the opportunity and provocation of their death; and though living they could not, yet being dead they can lye quietly together in my hand.

Fooliſh birds, was it not enough that birds of prey watched to devour them, but they muſt peck and ſcratch one another? Thus have I ſeen the birds of Paradiſe (Saints I mean) tearing and wounding each other, like ſo many birds of prey, and by their unchriſtian conteſts giving the occaſion of their common ruine; yea, and that not only when at liberty, as theſe were, but when incaged alſo; and yet, as one well obſerves, if ever Chriſtians will agree, 'twill either be in a priſon, or in heaven; for in a priſon their quarrelſome luſts lye low, and in heaven they ſhall be utterly done away.

But O! what pity is it, that thoſe who ſhall agree ſo perfectly in heaven, ſhould bite and devour each other upon earth? that it ſhould be ſaid of them, as one ingeniouſly obſerved, who ſaw their carcaſes lye together, as if they had lovingly embraced each other, who fell together by a Duel, *Quanta amicitia ſe invicem amplectuntur; qui mutua & implacabili inimicitia perierunt?*

Imbracing one another, now they lye
Who by each others bloudy hands did dye.

Or as he ſaid, who obſerved how quietly and peaceably the duſt and bones, even of enemies did lie together in the grave; *Non tanta vivi pace conjuncti eſſetis*; you did not live together ſo peaceably. If conſcience of Chriſt's command will not, yet the conſideration of common ſafety ſhould powerfully perſwade to unity and amity.

MEDIT. VII.

Upon the ſinging of a blind Finch by night.

A Dear friend, who was a great obſerver of the works of God in nature, told me, That being entertain'd with a ſight of many rarities at a friends houſe in *London*; among other things, his friend ſhewed him a Finch, whoſe eyes being put out, would frequently ſing, even at midnight. This Bird in my opinion, is the lively Emblem of ſuch careleſs and unconcerned perſons, as the Prophet deſcribes, *Amos* 6.4,5,6. who chant to the viol, when a diſmal night of trouble and affliction hath overſhadowed the Church. You would have thought it ſtrange to have heard this Bird ſing in the night, when all others are in a deep ſilence; except the Owl, an unclean Bird, and the Nightingal which before we made the Emblem of the Hypocrite. And as ſtrange it is, that any except the profane and hypocritical, ſhould ſo unſeaſonably expreſs their mirth and jollity; that any of *Sions* children ſhould live in pleaſure, whileſt ſhe her ſelf lyes in tears. The people of God in *Pſal.* 137. tell us, in what poſtures of ſorrow they ſate; even like birds, with their heads under their wings, during the night of their Captivity. *How ſhall we ſing the Lords ſong in a ſtrange land?* 'Tis like enough, ſuch as can ſing and chaunt in the night of the Churches trouble, have well feathered their neſts in the dayes of her proſperity; however let them know, that God will turn their unſeaſonable mirth into a ſadder note; and thoſe that now ſit ſad and ſilent, ſhall ſhortly ſing for joy of heart, when the winter is paſt, the rain over and gone, the flowers appear again upon the earth, and the time of the ſinging of Birds is come.

MEDIT. VIII.

Upon the comparing of two Birds neſts.

'TIs pretty to obſerve the ſtructure and commodiouſneſs of the habitations of theſe little architects, who though they act not by reaſon and counſel, but only by natural inſtinct, yet reaſon it ſelf could hardly have contrived a neater building of ſuch ſimple materials. How neatly hath the Thruſh ceiled or plaiſtered his neſt, with admirable art and induſtry? how warmly hath the Finch matted his? and both well fenced againſt the injury of the weather.

How comfortably hath nature provided convenient habitations, for theſe weak and tender young ones, who have warm lodging, and varietie of proviſions hourly brought them, without their care or pains? This trifling object ſuggeſts to my thoughts, a more excellent and ſerious contemplation, even the wonderful and unparallel'd abaſement of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who for my ſake voluntarily ſubmitted himſelf to a more deſtitute and neglected ſtate, than theſe Birds of the Air; for *Mat.* 8.20. he ſaith, *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have neſts; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.* *Heinſ. in loc.*

Vulpibus in ſaltu rupes exciſa latebras
Præbet, & aereis avibus dat ſilva quietem:
Aſt hominis Nato nullis ſuccedere tectis
Eſt licitum——————
The craggy rock to foxes holes affords,
The pleaſant woods, a reſting place to birds,
For Chriſt no fixed habitation's found
But what was borrowed, or the naked ground.

O melting conſideration! that the glorious Son of God, *Joh.* 1.14. *The Lord of glory*, Jam. 2.1. *The brightneſs of his fathers glory*. Heb. 1.3. *Who was rich*, 2 Cor. 8.9. *And*

thought it no robbery to be equal with God. Phil. 2. 8. who from *all eternity* was infinitely and ineffably *delighting and rejoycing in the boſome of his father*, Prov. 8. 30. That he, I ſay, ſhould manifeſt himſelf *in fleſh*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. yea, *in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh*, Rom. 8. 3. that is, in fleſh, that had the marks and effects of ſin upon it, as hunger, thirſt, pain, wearineſs and mortality; and not only ſo, but to chuſe ſuch a ſtate of outward meanneſs and poverty, never being poſſeſſed of a houſe in this world; but living as a ſtranger in other mens houſes, and ſtooping in this reſpect to a lower condition than the very birds of the Air, and all this for enemies. O let it work, both admiration and thankfulneſs in my ſoul! my body is better accommodated than the body of my Lord. Dear Jeſus! by how much the viler thou madeſt thy ſelf for me, by ſo much the dearer ſhalt thou be to me.

Quanto pro me vilior, tanto mihi Charior. Bern.

MEDIT. IX.

Upon the early ſinging of birds.

HOw am I reproved of ſluggiſhneſs by theſe watchful Birds! which cheerfully entertain the very dawning of the morning, with their cheerful and delightful warblings! they ſet their little ſpirits all awork betimes, whilſt my nobler ſpirits are bound with the bonds of ſoft and downy ſlumbers. For ſhame my ſoul! ſuffer not that Publican ſleep to ſeize ſo much of thy time, yea, thy beſt and freſheſt time; reprove and chide thy ſluggiſh body, as a good Biſhop once did, when upon the ſame occaſion he ſaid, *Surrexerunt paſſeres, & ſtertunt Pontifices.*

The early chirping Sparrows may reprove
Such lazy Biſhops as their beds do love.

Of many ſluggards it may be ſaid, as *Tully* ſaid of *Verres*, the Deputy of *Sicily*, *Quod nunquam ſolem nec orientem, nec occidentem viderat*; that he never ſaw the Sun riſing, being in bed after, nor ſetting, being in bed before.

'Tis

'Tis pity, that Chriſtians of all men ſhould ſuffer ſleep to cut ſuch large thongs out of ſo narrow a hide, as their time on earth is. But alas! it is not ſo much early riſing, as a wiſe improving thoſe freſh and free hours with God, that will inrich the ſoul; elſe, as our Proverb ſaith, a man may be early up, and never the neer; yea, far better it is to be found in bed ſleeping, than to be up doing nothing, or that which is worſe than nothing. O my ſoul! learn to prepoſſeſs thy ſelf every morning with the thoughts of God, and ſuffer not thoſe freſh and ſweet operations of thy mind, to be proſtituted to earthly things; for that is experimentally true which one in this caſe hath pertinently obſerved; That if the world get the ſtart of Religion in the morning, it will be hard for Religion to overtake it all the day after.

Mr. *Caſe* in Epiſt. to the morn. Lect.

MEDIT. X.

Upon the haltering of birds with a grain of hair.

Obſerving in a ſnowy ſeaſon, how the poor hungry Birds were haltred and drawn in by a grain of hair cunningly caſt over their heads, whilſt poor creatures they were buſily feeding, and ſuſpected no danger; and even whileſt their companions were drawn away from them, one after another, all the interruption it gave the reſt, was only for a minute or two, whileſt they ſtood peeping into that hole through which their companions were drawn, and then fell to their meat again, as buſily as before. I could not chuſe but ſay, Even thus ſurprizingly doth death ſteal upon the children of men, whilſt they are wholly intent upon the cares and pleaſures of this life, not at all ſuſpecting its ſo neer approach. Theſe Birds ſaw not the hand that inſnared them, nor do they ſee the hand of death plucking them one after another into the grave.

Omnibus

Ovid. *Omnibus obſcuras injecit illa manus*
Death's ſteps are ſwift, and yet no noiſe it makes;
Its hand unſeen, but yet moſt ſurely takes.

And even as the ſurviving Birds for a little time ſeemed to ſtand affrighted, peeping after their companions, and then as buſie as ever to their meat again: Juſt ſo it fares with the careleſs inconſiderate world, who ſee others daily dropping into eternity round about them, and for the preſent are a little ſtartled, and will look into the grave after their neighbours, and then fall as buſily to their earthly imployments and pleaſures again as ever, till their own turn comes.

I know, my God! that I muſt die as well as others; but, O let me not die as do others, let me ſee death before I feel it, and conquer it before it kill me; let it not come as an enemy upon my back, but rather let me meet it as a friend half way! Die I muſt, but let me lay up that good treaſure before I go, *Mat. 6. 19.* carry with me a good conſcience when I go, 2 *Tim.* 4. 6, 7. and leave behind me a good example when I am gone, and then let death come and welcom!

MEDITATIONS upon Beaſts.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the clogging of a ſtraying Beaſt.

HAd this Bullock contented himſelf, and remained quietly within his own bounds, his Owner had never put ſuch an heavy clog upon his neck; but I ſee the prudent Husbandman chuſes rather to keep him with his clog, than loſe him for want of one What this clog is to him, that is affliction and trouble to me; had my ſoul kept cloſe with God in liberty and proſperity, he would never thus have clogged me

me with adverſity; yea, and happy were it for me, if I might ſtray from God no more, who hath thus clogged me with preventive afflictions. If with *David* I might ſay, *Before I was afflicted I went aſtray, but now I have kept thy word, Pſal.* 119.67. O my ſoul! 'tis better for thee, to have thy pride clogged with poverty, thy ambition with reproach, thy carnal expectancies with conſtant diſappointments, than to be at liberty to run from God and duty.

'Tis true, I am ſometimes as weary of theſe troubles, as this poor Beaſt is of the clog he draws after him, and often wiſh my ſelf rid of them; but yet, if God ſhould take them off, for ought I know I might have cauſe to wiſh them on again, to prevent a greater miſchief. 'Tis ſtoried of *Baſil*, that for many years he was ſorely afflicted with an inveterate head-ach, (that was his clog) he often prayed for the removal of it, at laſt God removed it; but inſtead thereof he was ſorely exerciſed with the motions and temptations of luſt, which when he perceived, he as earneſtly deſired his head-ach again, to prevent a greater evil. Lord! if my corruptions may be prevented by my affliction, I refuſe not to be clogged with them; but my ſoul rather deſires thou wouldſt haſten the time when I ſhall be for ever freed from them both.

MEDIT. II.

Upon the love of a Dog to his Maſter.

HOw many a weary ſtep through mire and dirt hath this poor Dog followed my horſe heels to day? and all this for a very poor reward, for all he gets by it at night, is but bones and blows, yet will he not leave my company, but is content upon ſuch hard terms, to travel with me from day to day.

O my ſoul! what conviction and ſhame may this leave upon thee? who art often times even weary of following thy Maſter *Chriſt*, whoſe rewards and incouragements of obedience

dience are so incomparably sweet and sure. I cannot beat back this dog from following me, but every inconsiderable trouble is enough to discourage me in the way of my duty. Ready I am to resolve as that Scribe did, *Mat.* 8. 19. *Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*; but how doth my heart faulter when I must encounter with the difficulties of the way? O! let me make a whole heart-choice of Christ, for my portion and happiness! and then I shall never leave him, nor turn back from following him, though the present difficulties were much more, and the present incouragements much less.

MEDIT. III.

Upon the fighting of two Rams.

TAking notice how furiously these Sheep which by nature are mild and gentle, did yet like bulls push each other taking their advantage by going back to meet with a greater rage and fury. Methought I saw in this a plain Emblem of the unchristian contests and animosities which fall out amongst them that call themselves the people of God, who in Scripture are also stiled Sheep, for their meekness and innocency; and yet, through the remaining corruptions that are in them, thus do they push each other; (as one long since complained) *non secus ac.*

Cum duo conversis inimica in prælia tauri,
Frontibus incurrunt————
Shall Christians one another wound and push,
Like furious Bulls, when they together rush?

The fighting of these sheep doth in two respects, notably comport with the sinful practises of contending Christians, (1) That in this fight they ingage with their heads one against another; and what are they but those head-notions

or

or oppoſition of Sciences, falſly ſo called, that have made ſo many broyls and uproars in the Chriſtian world? O! What claſhings have theſe heady opinions cauſed in the Churches? firſt heads, and then hearts have claſhed. Chriſtians have not diſtinguiſhed betwixt *adverſarius litis*, & *perſonæ*; an adverſary to the *opinion*, and to the *perſon*; but dipt their tongues and pens in vinegar and gall, ſhamefully aſperſing and reproaching one another becauſe their underſtandings were not caſt into one mould, and their heads all of a bigneſs. But (2) that which Countrey-men obſerve from the fighting of Sheep, *That it preſages foul and ſtormy weather*, is much more certainly conſequent upon the fighting of Chriſts Sheep. Do theſe claſh and puſh? Surely *it is an infallible prognoſtick of an enſuing ſtorm*, Mal. 4. 6.

MEDIT. IV.

Upon the catching of a Horſe in a fat Paſture.

WHen this Horſe was kept in poor ſhort leas, where he had much ſcope, but little graſs how gentle and tractable was he then? he would not only ſtand quiet to be taken, but come to hand of his own accord, and follow me up and down the field for a cruſt of bread, or handful of Oats; but ſince I turned him into this fat paſture, he comes no more to me, nor will ſuffer me to come neer him; but throws up his heels wantonly againſt me, and flies from me, as if I were rather his *enemy* than *Benefactor*. In this I behold the carriage of my own heart towards God, who the more he hath done for me, the ſeldomer doth he hear from me, in a low and afflicted ſtate, how tractable is my heart to duty? Then it comes to the foot of God voluntarily; but in an exalted condition, how wildly doth my heart run from God and duty? With this ungrateful requital God faulted his own people, *Jer.* 2.31. teachable and tractable in the *wilderneſs*, but when fatted in that rich paſture *Canaan*, then, *we are Lords*

we will come no more to thee. How ſoon are all Gods former benefits forgotten? and how often is that antient obſervation verified, even in his own people?

Μετὰ τὴν δόσιν πάλιν γηράσκει χάρις.
Poſt munera cito conſeneſcit gratia.
No ſooner do we gifts on ſome beſtow,
But preſently our gifts gray headed grow.

But that's a bad Tenant, that will maintain a Suit at Law againſt his Landlord, with his own rent; and a bad heart that will fight againſt God, with his own mercies. I wiſh it may be with my heart, as it is reported to be with the waters in the Kingdom of *Congo*, that are never ſo ſweet to the taſte, as when the tide is at the higheſt.

MEDIT. V.

Upon the hunting of a Deer.

THe full-mouthed cry of theſe Dogs, which from the morning have hunted this poor tired Deer, which is now no longer able to ſtand before them, but is compaſſed round with them, who thirſt for, and will preſently ſuck her blood; brings to my thoughts the condition and ſtate of *Jeſus Chriſt*, in the dayes of his fleſh, who was thus hunted from place to place by blood-thirſty enemies. Upon this very account, the 22. *Pſal.* which treats of his death, is inſcribed with the title of *Aijeleth Shahar*, which ſignifies the *Hind of the morning* and fully imports the ſame notion, which this occaſion preſented me with; for look, as the *Hind* or *Deer* which is intended to be run down that day, is rouzed by the Dogs early in the morning. So was Chriſt, in the very morning of his infancy, by bloudy *Herod*, and that cruel pack confederated with him. Thus was he chaſed from place to place, till that was fulfilled which was prophetically written of him in *ver.* 16. of the forecited *Pſalm*; *For Dogs have*

com-

compaſſed me about, the aſſembly of the wicked have incloſed me; they pierced my hands and my feet.

And canſt thou expect, O my ſoul! to fare better than he did, or eſcape the rage of bloudy men? Surely, if the Spirit of Chriſt dwell in thee; if his holineſs have ſavoured thee, theſe Dogs will wind it and give thee chaſe too; they go upon the ſcent of holineſs ſtill, and would hunt to deſtruction every one, in whom there is *aliquid Chriſti*, any thing of Chriſt, if the gracious providence of the Lord did not ſometimes rate them off: For it is no leſs a pleaſure, which ſome wicked ones take in hunting the people of God, than what *Claudian* the *Poet* obſerves men uſe to take, in hunting wild beaſts.

Venator defeſſa thoro quum membra reponit
Mens tamen ad Sylvas, & ſua luſtra redit.
Whilſt weary Huntſmen in the night do ſleep,
Their fancies in the woods; ſtill hunting keep.

Lord! ſhould I with the hypocrite decline the profeſſion and practiſe of holineſs, to eſcape the rage of perſecuting enemies, at what time they ceaſe, my own conſcience would begin to hunt me like a Blood-hound; let me rather chuſe to be chaſed by men than God, to flee before purſuing enemies, than be dogged from day to day with a guilty conſcience.

MEDITATIONS upon Trees.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the fall of bloſſoms, nipt by a froſty morning.

BEholding in an early Spring, fruit Trees embоſſed with beautiful bloſſoms of various colours, which breathed

ſorth the delicious odours into the circumambient air, and adorned the branches on which they grew, like ſo many rich jewels, or glittering pendents; and further obſerving, how theſe perfumed bloſſoms dropt off, being bitten with the froſt and diſcoloured all the ground, as if a ſhower of ſnow had fallen; I ſaid, within my ſelf, theſe ſweet and early bloſſoms are not unlike my ſweet and early affections to the Lord, in the days of my firſt acquaintance with him. Oh! what fervent love? panting deſires, and heavenly delights beautified my ſoul in thoſe dayes! the odoriferous ſcent of the ſweeteſt bloſſoms, the morning breath of the moſt fragrant flowers, hath not half that ſweetneſs with which thoſe my firſt affections were inriched. O! happy time, thrice pleaſant Spring! my ſoul hath it ſtill in remembrance, and is humbled within me; for theſe alſo were but bloſſoms which now are nipt and faded, that firſt flouriſh is gone; my heart is like the Winters earth, becauſe thy face, Lord, is to me like a Winter Sun. *Awake, O North wind! and come, South wind, blow upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out, then let my beloved come into his garden and eat his pleaſant fruit!*

MEDIT. II.

Upon the knitting or ſetting of fruit.

I Have often obſerved, that when the bloſſoms of a tree, ſet and knit, though the flouriſh thereof be gone, and nothing but the bare rudiment of the expected fruit be left; yet then the fruit is much better ſecured from the danger of froſts and winds, than whilſt it remained in the flower or bloſſom; for now it hath paſt one of thoſe *critical periods*, in which ſo many trees miſcarry and loſe their fruit. And methought, this *natural Obſervation* fairly led me to this *Theological Propoſition. That good motions and holy purpoſes in the ſoul are never ſecured and paſt their moſt dangerous* Criſis, *till they*

they be turned into fixed reſolutions, and anſwerable executions, which is as the knitting and ſetting of them.

Upon this Propoſition my melting thoughts thus dilated, Happy had it been for thee, my ſoul! had all the bleſſed motions of the Spirit been thus knit and fixed in thee. O, how have mine affections blown and budded under the warm beams of the Goſpel! but a chill blaſt from the cares, troubles and delights of the world without, and the vanity and deadneſs of the heart within have blaſted all; my goodneſs hath been but as a morning dew, or early cloud that vaniſheth away: And even of divine Ordinances I may ſay, what is ſaid of humane Ordinances, *They have periſhed in the uſing.* A bloſſom is but *fructus imperfectus, & ordinabilis*, an imperfect thing in it ſelf, and ſomething in order to fruit; a good motion and holy purpoſe, is but *opus imperfectum, & ordinabile*, an imperfect work, in order to a compleat work of the Spirit, When that *primus impetus*, thoſe firſt motions were ſtrong upon my heart, had I then purſued them in the force and vigour of them, how many difficulties might I have overcome? Revive thy work, O Lord! and give not to my ſoul a miſcarrying womb, or dry breaſts.

MEDIT. III.

Upon the ſight of a fair ſpreading Oak.

WHat a lofty flouriſhing Tree is here? It ſeems rather to be a little Wood, than a ſingle Tree; every limb thereof having the dimenſions and branches of a Tree in it; and yet as great as it is, it was once but a little ſlip, which one might pull up with two fingers; this vaſt body was contained virtually, and potentially in a ſmall Acorn. Well then, I will never deſpiſe the day of ſmall things, nor deſpair of arriving to an eminency of grace, though at preſent it be but as a bruiſed reed, and the things that are in me, be ready to dye. As things in nature, ſo the things of the Spirit

Spirit grow up to their fulneſs and perfection, by ſlow and inſenſible degrees. The famous and heroical acts of the moſt renowned believers, were ſuch as themſelves could not once perform, or it may be think they ever ſhould. Great things both in nature and grace, come from ſmall and contemptible beginnings.

MEDIT. IV.

Upon the ſight of many ſticks lodged in the branches of a choice fruit Tree.

HOw is this Tree batter'd with ſtones, and loaded with ſticks that have been thrown at it? whileſt thoſe that grow about it being barren, or bearing harſher fruit, eſcape untouched! Surely, if its fruit had not been ſo good, its uſage had not been ſo bad: and yet it is affirmed, that ſome trees, as the Walnut, &c. bear the better, for being thus bruiſed and battered.

Even thus it fares, in both reſpects with the beſt of men; the more holy, the more envied and perſecuted; every one that paſſes by will have a fling at them. Methinks I ſee, how devils and wicked men walk round about the people of God whom he hath encloſed in armes of power, like ſo many boys about an Orchard, whoſe lips water to have a fling at them. But God turns all the ſtones of reproach into precious ſtones to his people, they bear the better for being thus batter'd.

And in them is that ancient obſervation verified.

Creſcunt virtutem palmæ, creſcuntque Coronæ
Mutantur mundi prælia, pace Dei.
The Palmes and Crowns of virtue thus increaſe;
Thus perſecution's turned into peace.

Let me be but fruitful to God in holineſs, and ever abounding in the work of the Lord, and then, whilſt devils and men

are

are flinging at me, either by hand or tongue perſecutions, I will ſing amidſt them all with the divine Poet,

What open force, or hidden charm
Can blaſt my fruits, or bring me harm
Whilſt the incloſure is thine arm.

Herb. Poem. p. 125.

MEDIT. V.

Upon the gathering of choice fruit, from a ſcrubbed unpromiſing Tree.

WOuld any man think to find ſuch rare delicious fruit upon ſuch an unworthy Tree to appearance as this is? I ſhould rather have expected the moſt delicious fruit from the moſt handſome and flouriſhing Trees; but I ſee I muſt neither judge the worth of Trees or Men, by their external form and appearance. This is not the firſt time I have been deceived in judging by that rule; under fair and promiſing out-ſides I have found nothing of worth, and in many deformed deſpicable bodies, I have found precious and richly furniſhed ſouls. The ſap and juice of this ſcrubbed Tree is concocted into rare and excellent fruits, whilſt the juice and ſap of ſome other fair, but barrren Trees, ſerves only to keep them from rotting, which is all the uſe that many ſouls which dwell in beautiful bodies ſerve for; they have (as one ſaith) *animam pro ſale*; their ſouls are but ſalt to their bodies. Or thus,

The only uſe to which their ſouls do ſerve
Is but like ſalt, their bodies to preſerve.

If God have given me a ſound ſoul, in a ſound body, I have a double mercy to bleſs him for; but whether my body be vigorous and beautiful or not, yet let my ſoul be ſo: For as the eſteem of this Tree, ſo the eſteem and true honour of every man riſes rather from his fruitfulneſs and uſefulneſs, than from his ſhape and form.

MEDIT.

MEDIT. VI.

Upon an excellent, but irregular Tree.

SEeing a Tree grow somewhat irregular, in a very neat Orchard, I told the Owner it was pity that Tree should stand there; and that if it were mine I would root it up, and thereby reduce the Orchard to an exact uniformity. It was replyed to this purpose, that he rather regarded the *fruit* than the *form*; and that this slight inconveniency was abundantly preponderated by a more considerable advantage. This Tree, said he, which you would root up, hath yielded me more fruit than many of those Trees which have nothing else to commend them, but their regular scituation. I could not but yield to the reason of this answer, and could wish it had been spoken so loud, that all our Uniformity-men had heard it, who will not stick to root up many hundred of the best bearers in the Lords Orchard, because they stand not in an exact order with other more conformable, but less beneficial Trees, who do *perdere substantiam propter accidentia*, destroy the fruit, to preserve the form.

Not much unlike such foolish men are those
That strive for shadows, and the substance lose.

MEDITATIONS upon a Garden.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the new modelling of a Garden.

A Gentlewoman who had lately seen a neat and curious Garden, returns to her own with a greater dislike of it then ever; resolves to new model the whole plot, and reduce

duce it to a better form, is now become ſo curious and neat, that not a weed or ſtone is ſuffered in it, but all muſt lye in exquiſite order; and what ever ornament ſhe had obſerved in her neighbours, ſhe is now reſtleſs till ſhe ſee it in her own.

Happy were it thought I, if in an holy emulation, every one would thus endeavour to rectifie the diſorders of their own converſation, by the excellent graces they behold in the more heavenly and regular lives of others. Some Chriſtians there are (I wiſh their number were greater) whoſe actions lye in ſuch a comely and beautiful order, that few of their neighbours can look upon their examples without ſelf-conviction and ſhame; but few are ſo happy to be provoked unto ſelf-reformation but ſuch rare patterns. I ſee, it is much eaſier to pull up many weeds out of a Garden, than one corruption out of the heart, and to procure an hundred flowers to adorn a knot, than one grace to beautifie the ſoul. 'Tis more natural to corrupt man to envy, than to imitate the ſpiritual excellencies of others.

MEDIT. II.

Upon the pulling up of a Leek.

A White head, and a green tail! how well doth this reſemble an old wanton Lover! whoſe green youthful luſts are not extinguiſhed, though his white head declares that nature is almoſt ſo. Gray hairs ſhould be alwayes match'd with grave deportments, and the ſins of youth ſhould rather be the griefs, than pleaſures of old age. 'Tis ſad when the ſins of the ſoul, like the diſeaſes of the body grow ſtronger, as nature grows weaker: And it recals to my mind that ancient Obſervation of *Menander*.

Γέρων ἐρῶν ἔσχατη κακὴ τύχη.

Senex amore captus, ultimum malum.

It is the worſt of evils to behold
Strong youthful luſts to rage in one that's old.

'Tis a thouſand pities, that thoſe who have one foot in the grave, ſhould live as if the other were in hell! that their luſts ſhould be ſo lively, when their bodies are three parts dead. Such ſinful practiſes bring upon them more contempt and ſhame, than their hoary heads and reverend faces can procure them honour.

Ovid. 5. Faſt.

Magna fuit capitis quondam reverentia cani,
Inque ſuo pretio ruga ſenilis erat.
Gray hairs, and aged wrinckles did of old
Procure more reverence than bags of gold.

But alas! how little reſpect or reverence can the hoary head obtain amongſt wiſe men, except it be found in the way of righteouſneſs? I think, the loweſt eſteem is too much for an old ſervant of the devil; and the higheſt honour little enough for an ancient and faithful ſervant of Chriſt.

MEDIT. III.

Upon a heedleſs tread in a curious Garden.

PAſſing through the ſmall diviſions of a curious knot, which was richly adorned with rare Tulips, and other beautiful flowers, I was very careful to ſhun thoſe flowers, which indeed had no other worth to commend them, but their exquiſite colours, and unadviſedly trod upon and ſpoyled an excellent choice herb, which though it grew obſcurely, yet had rare phyſical vertues in it.

When I was made ſenſible of the involuntary treſpaſs I had committed, I thought I could ſcarſely make the Owneer a better compenſation, than by telling him, that herein (though againſt my will) I did but tread in the footſteps of the greateſt part of the world, who are very careful (as I was) to keep their due diſtance from ſplendid, though worthleſs Gallants; mean while trampling upon, and cruſhing under

under foot, the obſcure, but moſt precious ſervants of God in the world. As little do they heed theſe moſt excellent perſons, as I did this precious herb.

Summa ingenia in occulto ſæpe latent, ſaith *Plautus*,
Rare wits and herbs ſometimes do ſculk and ſhrink
In ſuch blind holes, as one would little think.

For my own part, I deſire to tread upon no man with the foot of contempt and pride, much leſs upon any good man; and that I may not, it concerns me to look before I ſtep; I mean, to conſider, before I cenſure: Had I done ſo by this rare Herb, I had never hurt it.

MEDIT. IV.

Upon a withered Poſey taken up in the way.

FInding in my walk a Poſey, of once ſweet and fragrant, but now dry and withered flowers, which I ſuppoſed to be thrown away by one that had formerly worn it: Thus ſaid I, doth the unfaithful world uſe its friends, when providence hath blaſted and withered them; whilſt they are rich and honourable, they will put them into their boſoms, as the Owner of this Poſey did, whilſt it was freſh and fragrant; and as eaſily throw them away, as uſeleſs and worthleſs things, when thus they come to be withered. Such uſage as this *Petronius* long ſince complained of.

Cum fortuna manet vultum ſervatis amici,
Cum cecedit turpi vertitis ora fuga. (i. e.)
Are they in honour? then we ſmile like friends,
And with their fortunes all our friendſhip ends.

But this looſe and deceitful friendſhip ſtinks ſo odiouſly in the very noſtrils of nature, that a *Heathen Poet* ſeverily taxes, and condemns it as moſt unworthy of a man.

Turpe sequi casum, & fortunæ cedere, amicum
Et nisi sit fœlix esse negare suum. (i. e.)
'Tis base to change with fortune, and deny
A faithful friend, because in poverty.

And is this indeed the friendship of the world? Doth it thus use them whom once it honoured? Then Lord! let me never seek its friendship. O, let me esteem the smiles and honours of men less, and thy love and favour more. Thy love is indeed unchangeable, being pure, free, and built upon nothing that is mutable; thou never servest thy friends as the world doth its darlings.

MEDIT. V.

Upon the sudden withering of a Rose.

BEeing with my friend in a Garden, we gathered each of us a Rose; he handled his tenderly, smel'd to it but seldom and sparingly, I alwayes kept it to my nose, or squeezed it in my hand, whereby in a very short time, it lost both colour and sweetness, but his still remained as sweet and fragrant as if it had been growing upon its own root. These Roses said I, are the true emblems of the best and sweetest creature-enjoyments in the world; which being moderately and cautiously used and enjoyed, may for a long time yield sweetness to the Possessor of them; but if once the affections seize too greedily upon them, and squeeze them too hard, they quickly wither in our hands, and we lose the comfort of them; and that either through the souls surfeiting upon them, or the Lord's righteous and just removal of them, because of the excess of our affections to them; earthly comforts, like pictures, shew best at a due distance. It was therefore a good saying of *Homer*, ἀνδρὶ ξεινόδοκον &c.

Mihi

Mihi nunquam is placet hoſpes
Qui valde preterque modum odid vel amat.
I like him not who at the rate
Of all his might doth love or hate.

'Tis a point of excellent wiſdom to keep the golden bridle of moderation, upon all the affections we exerciſe upon earthly things, and never to ſlip thoſe reins, unleſs when they move towards God, in whoſe love there is no danger of exceſs.

MEDIT. VI.

Upon the ſudden withering of beautiful flowers.

HOw freſh and orient did theſe Flowers lately appear, when being daſh'd over with the morning dew, they ſtood in all their pride and glory, breathing out their delicious odours, which perfumed the air round about them, but now are daver'd and ſhrivelled up, and have neither any deſirable beauty, or ſavour in them.

So vain a thing is the admired beauty of creatures, which ſo captivates the hearts, and exerciſes a pleaſing tyranny over the affections of vain man, yet is as ſuddenly blaſted as the beauty of a flower.

Forma bonum fragile eſt quantumque accedit ad annos,
Fit minor & ſpacio carpitur ipſa ſuo.
Nec ſemper violæ, nec ſemper lilia florent
Et riget amiſſa ſpina relicta roſa.
Tempus erit quo vos ſpeculum vidiſſe pigebit,
Jam veniunt rugæ quæ tibi corpus arent, &c.
How frail is beauty? in how ſhort a time
It fades! like Roſes which have paſt their prime.

So

So wrinckled age the faireſt face will plow,
And caſt deep furrows on the ſmootheſt brow.
Then where's that lovely tempting face? alas!
Your ſelves would bluſh to view it in a glaſs,

If then thou delighteſt in beauty (O my ſoul!) chuſe that which is laſting, There is a beauty which never fades, even the beauty of holineſs upon the inner man; this abides freſh and orient for ever, and ſparkles glorioufly when thy face (the ſeat of natural beauty) is become an abhorrent and loathſome ſpectacle. Holineſs enammels and ſprinkles over the face of the ſoul with a beauty upon which Chriſt himſelf is enammour'd, even imperfect holineſs on earth is a Roſe that breaths ſweetly in the bud; in heaven it will be full blown, and abide in its prime to all eternity.

MEDIT. VII.

Upon the tenderneſs of ſome choice Flowers.

HOw much care is neceſſary to preſerve the life of ſome Flowers? They muſt be boxed up in the Winter, others muſt be covered with glaſſes in their ſpringing up, the fineſt and richeſt mould muſt be ſifted about the roots, and aſſiduouſly watered, and all this little enough, and ſometimes too little to preſerve them, whilſt other common and worthleſs flowers grow without any help of ours; yea, we have no leſs to do, to rid our gardens of them, than we have to make the former grow there.

Thus ſtands the caſe with our hearts, in reference to the motions of grace and ſin. Holy thoughts of God muſt be aſſiduouſly watered by prayer, earthed up by Meditation, and defended by watchfulneſs; and yet all this is ſometimes too little to preſerve them alive in our ſouls. Alas! the heart is a ſoyl that agrees not with them, they are tender things, and

and a ſmall matter will nip and kill them. To this purpoſe is the complaint of the divine Poet.

Herbert.

Who would have thought a joy
ſo coy ?
To be offended ſo,
and go
So ſuddenly away.
Hereafter I had need
take heed.
Joyes among other things
have wings,
And watch their opportunities of flight,
Convert ing in a moment day to night.

But vain thoughts, and unholy ſuggeſtions, theſe ſpread themſelves, and root deep in the heart, they naturally agree with the ſoyl; ſo that it is almoſt impoſſible at any time to be rid of them. 'Tis hard to forget what is our ſin to remember.

MEDIT. VIII.

Upon the ſtrange means of preſerving the life of Vegetables.

I Obſerve that plants and herbs are ſometimes killed by froſts, and yet without froſts they would neither live nor thrive; they are ſometimes drowned by water, and yet without water they cannot ſubſiſt; they are refreſhed and cheered by the heat of the Sun, and yet that heat ſometimes kills and ſcorches them up. Thus lives my ſoul, troubles and afflictions ſeem to kill all its comforts; and yet without theſe, its comforts could not live. The Sun-blaſts of proſperity ſometimes refreſh me, and yet thoſe Sun-blaſts are the likelieſt way to wither me; By what ſeeming contradictions is

is the life of my ſpirit preſerved? what a miſtery? what a Paradox is the life of a Chriſtian?

Welcome my health, this ſickneſs makes me well
Med'cines adieu:
When with diſeaſes, I have liſt to dwell,
I'le wiſh for you.
Welcome my ſtrength, this weakneſs makes me able.
Powers adieu:
When I am weary grown of ſtanding ſtable,
I'le wiſh for you.
Welcome my wealth, this loſs hath gain'd me more
Riches adieu:
When I again grow greedy to be poor
I'le wiſh for you.
Welcome my credit, this diſgrace is glory:
Honours adieu:
When for renown and fame I ſhall be ſorry:
I'le wiſh for you.
Welcome content, this ſorrow is my joy.
Pleaſures adieu,
When I deſire ſuch grief as may annoy:
I'le wiſh for you.
Health, ſtrength, and riches, credit, and content
Are ſpared beſt ſometimes, when they are ſpent,
Sickneſs, and weakneſs, loſſe, diſgrace, and ſorrow
Lend moſt ſometimes, when moſt they ſeem to borrow.

And if by theſe contrary and improbable wayes, the Lord preſerves our ſouls in life, no marvel then we find ſuch ſtrange and ſeemingly contradictory motions of our hearts, under the various dealings of God with us, and are ſtill reſtleſs in what condition ſoever he puts us; which reſtleſs frame was excellently expreſſed in that pious Epigram of reverend *Gattaker*, made a little before his death.

I thirſt

I thirſt for thirſtineſs, I weep for tears;
well pleas'd I am to be diſpleaſed thus:
The only thing I fear is want of fears:
ſuſpecting I am not ſuſpicious.
I cannot chuſe but live, becauſe I dye
And when I am not dead how glad am I?

Yet when I am thus glad for ſenſe of pain
and careful am leſt I ſhould careleſs be
Then do I grieve for being glad again,
and fear leſt careleſsneſs take care for me.
Amidſt theſe reſtleſs thoughts, this reſt I find.
For thoſe that reſt not here, there's reſt behind

Jam tetigi portum valete.

F I N I S,

A TABLE of the Contents of this Treatise, both Natural and Spiritual.

Natural.

A

Page

Abuse *of Cattel* 205,206
Actions *and seed resembled* 147, 148
Accountableness *of workmen to their Masters* 8
Arable *Land, how qualified* 36,37
Altitude *of the clouds* 87

B

Barns *when full, fill carnal hearts with joy* 156. *Some have no* Barns, *yet much joy* 156
Beasts, *their bondage by sin* 205,206
Blastings, *incident to Corn* 115
Buildings, *where erected* 5

C

Capacity *of beasts how narrow* 208
Chaff *grows with Wheat, its usefulness to it, its worthlessness in it self, its separation from the Corn* 167, 168

Corn

Spiritual.

A

Page

Actions *eternal in their effects* 147,148
Account *of Ministers great* 8
Afflictions *parallel'd with threshing, in five things* 160,161,&c.
Afflicted *Saints Reflections* 163
Apostates *Reflections* 69,118

B

Barrenness, *the Christians reproach,* 12 *Its causes* 55. *its danger* 56,57,58
Beauty *of glorified bodies* 103
Body *of man, its noble structure, commodious situation, and excellent configuration* 207
Business *of a Christian, and of the Husbandman, parallel'd in four things* 18,19,20

C

Carelessness *reproved by the worldlings diligence* 143
Caius Marius Victorius *his strange conversion* 144
Duke of Condy *his rare saying* 123

Gen-

Natural.

Page
Corn *cannot resist the Sickle* 131. *Received into the Reapers bosom,* 131. *Corn not to be reaped till ripe; signs when it is so* 132, 133.
Crop, *the first usually the best* 10

D.

Death *of seeds, how to be understood* 101
Deeds *for estates, how carefully proved and preserved* 226
Diligence, *the thriving way* 24
Diligence, *a credit to men* 25
Disappointments, *grievous to Husbandmen* 6
Dressing *of ground* 4
Drought *follows a glut of rain* 85

E

Ease, *how little the beasts have* 207
Enclosures, *the end of them* 3
End *of all Husbandry* 7
Estates *increased and preserved, how* 26
Expectation *of Harvest,* 122. *the grounds*

Spiritual.

Page
Censorious *persons reproved* 111
Church, *Gods fee,* 5. *how purchased* 3. *how dressed,* 4. *what expected from it,* 6. *its dignities* 11
Christ *a sufficient portion to the poor* 156
Childrens *souls neglected, how sinful* 201, 202
Comforts *for declining Christians* 48, 49
Competency *best for Christians* 37. 38, 39, 40
Conviction *parallel'd with plowing, in nine particulars* 64 65, 66 67
Convertion *in old age a wonder* 144

D

Declining *of grace, how far* 46, 47
Deceived *souls, their reflections* 78
Death *and reaping parallel'd, in five things* 131, 132
Decayes *in grace lamented* 137
Diligence *in religion, honourable, safe, beneficial and comfortable* 25, 26
Delight *spiritual, whence it flows* 32, 33
Discouragement *should not seize on Ministers, though they see no present fruit* 46 47
Disobedient *Children, their sin aggravated* 203

E

Earthly *employments suit earthly hearts* 33
Elezarius *his excellent saying to his wife* 122
Elect *souls Reflection* 190

Natural.

Page

grounds and incouragements of it 124,125

F

Famine, *occasioned by drought*, 90. *Its effects terrible* 91, 92
Fowls, *enemies to seed* 155
Frosts *conduce to a good Harvest, how* 72
Fruits *shaken, and when* 186,187

G

Gathering *in of fruit, the Emblem of the end of the world* 186,187
Graffing, *the manner of it shewn* 180
Graffs, *their danger till they take hold of the stock*, 181, *All do not thrive alike in the stock* 183

H

Harvest, *the joy thereof described* 158 159
Harvest *when catching, what Husbandmen do* 130
Harrow, *its use in Husbandry* 72
Hedges, *their use* 4
Health *preserved by labour* 56
Horses *how carefully fed and dressed* 200

Hus-

Spiritual.

Page

Examination *of our selves needful* 166
Example *of the multitude no plea* 189
Evidences *for heaven, and Land compared, in seven things* 24

F

Famine *spiritual, the sorest of judgements* 91,92.93.94 95,
Few *saved, and their Emblem in nature* 188,189
Feeding *beasts, their plenty and liberty* 216
Formalists *Reflections* 60,196

G

Gifts, *how excelled by grace* 74.75,76
Gospel, *its first entertainment best* 10
Removed by reason of barrenness 11
Grace *carried through many dangers* 116,117,118,
Gracious *principles parallel'd with seed* 71,72,73
Gracious *and* growing *souls Reflections* 42,77,136

H

Harvest *of glory, what, and when* 125
Healthful *Christians Reflection* 104
Humble *hearers profit most* 10
Hypocrisie *parallel'd with chaff* 166, 167. *It acts like grace* 109,110, 111,112
Hypocrites *their Reflections* 34,41, 169

Hy-

THE TABLE.

Natural.

Page

Husbandmen *their work ſpending,* 19
yet have ſome reſting dayes 20

I

Influences *of heaven neceſſary to produce and ripen fruits* 81,82,
Joy *natural, four ſorts of it* 152,153
Joy *of Harveſt, the cauſes and grounds of it* 154,155,156,157
Joy *of Harveſt; but a gift of common providence* 155

L

Labourers, *their hands ſufficient for them and theirs* 8
Land *when ſpent, how recovered* 45
Labours *of Husbandmen ends at, and ſometimes before death,* 21. *It ſweetens their bed* 26
Loſt *Cattel how recovered* 210,211

M

Mowing *when and what it repreſents* 138
Multiplicity *of work and work-men in Husbandry* 7,18
Miry *places barren,* 54. *What cauſes Mire* 55

Spiritual

Page

Hypocrites *inſide opened at death* 195

I

Ignorance *inexcuſable in Husbandmen* 14 15
Joy *ſpiritual, how excellent,* 153 154. *'Tis perfected when natural joy is finiſhed,* 154. *Peculiar mercies, the grounds of it,* 155. *God its object,* 155
Ingratitude *for the mercy of our creation, how great a ſin* 206,207,208

L

Learning *no plea before God* 177
Lingring *Saints Reflection* 127
Longing *for heaven, what, and by whom* 126
Loſt *ſinners parallel'd with Straying Cattel; in five particulars* 211,212
Lycurgus *his Law for Parents, what* 203

M

Maintenance *due to Miniſters* 8
Maturity *of grace, three ſigns of it* 133
Maturity *of ſin, ſix ſigns of it* 134, 135
Miniſters *muſt be judicious,* 14. *Compared with clouds, in three particulars,* 86,87. *Their Reflections* 61,86 87

Natural.

Page

N

Nature, *and natural causes, what* 81
Negligence *in Summer, upon presumption of fair weather, a folly* 142

O

Occasion *to be eyed by Husbandmen* 140
Opportunities *of plowing, sowing, reaping once lost, irrecoverable for that year* 140,141

P

Pleasure *much in Husbandry* 31
Plowing, *requires judgement,* 63. *'Tis hard work* 84
Plow *rends the earth, discovers things hid under the surface* 65
Plowing *a preparatory and respective work,* 66. *It kills weeds,* 67. *best after rain* 67
Plow-man *must make no baulks in good ground* 67
Posterity *to be provided for* 221
Poverty *when extream, a snare* 39
Providence *in Husbandmen commendable* 139

Rain

Spiritual.

Page

Ministry *its scope and end, what* 8
Moral *persons reflections* 150

N

Names, *what vain things in Religion* 22
Neglecting *soul seasons dangerous* 142, 143

O

Obedience *must be free and chearful* 50
Ordinances, *their influences, what, and whence* 81,82,97
Original *sin compared with sap* 175

P

Parents *convinced of their sin* 203
Pains *of Ministers visible, sometimes in the peoples lives* 9
Patience *of Saints sits, grounds* 122,123 124,125,
Poor, *if godly, incouraged greatly* 219
Presumptuous *persons Reflections* 112, 113,144,
Presence *of God singular in his Church* 13
Profane *persons Reflection* 149
Persecutors *Reflections* 163
Prayer, *the golden key to open mystical clouds* 8
Professors *barren, fewel for hell* 193, 194

Prospe-

THE TABLE.

Natural.

Page

R

Rain *is from heaven, falls by divine appointment, great difference in it, warm rain moſt beneficial, former and latter both needful, obtained by prayer* 82,83,84 85
Reaping *the fit ſeaſon thereof* 129

S

Seed-corn, *how qualified and prepared,* 71. *Advantaged by early ſowing,* 72 *much vigour in a ſmall ſeed* 73
Seeds *produce their own kind* 146
Springing *of ſeeds and plants, whence* 81,82. *cannot be hindred when the time comes,* 102
Sowing *done in hope, and in ſeaſon* 102
Stalk *potentially in a ſmall ſeed* 73
Summer *why appointed* 141

T

Tares, *their reſemblance to wheat* 108
Threſhing *the ancient manner of it,* 160 *the uſe and end of it* 161

Threſh-

Spiritual.

Proſperous *ſinners, and feeding beaſts parallel'd, in five particulars* 217 218
Prudence *in Chriſtians commended and urged* 14,141

R

Regenerate *ſouls their reflections* 183 184
Recovery *of loſt ſinners by Chriſt opened and parallel'd with ſeeking of loſt Cattel* 210,211,212
Reſurrection *parallel'd with ſpringing Corn* 101,102
Reſurrection *the glory of that ſtate* 107 108

S

Seed-corn *how to be ſteeped before it be ſown* 81
Sickly *Chriſtians their comfort* 105
Sincere *ſouls Reflection* 59,170 77
Sloth *inexcuſable in Chriſtians* 22,23 26
Straying *from God its emblem* 211
Stock *advantaged to be removed from our natural ſtock* 176
Support *for declining ſouls* 51

T

Tree, *the emblem of the world* 188
Toad, *how the ſight of a* Toad *affected a ſhepherd* 206

Theif

THE TABLE.

Natural.

Page

Threshing *corn, what it resembles*, 162
Trees *when dead, cut down* 192
Trees *how laden with fruit*, 186,187
as they leaned, so they fall 194

V

Valleys *most fruitful* 10
Variable *weather in Harvest* 141
Ungrafted *fruit harsh*, 147. *The cause thereof* 176
Vexation *to Husbandmen to be hindred in their business* 9
Union *with the graff and stock* 180

W

Wearines *of labourers at night* 7
Weeds *pernicious to Corn* 115
Winnowing, *its use and end*, 165,166
Winter *sweetned by Summers providence* 142

Spiritual.

Page

Thief *on the cross, no president to careless ones* 143
To morrow *a new day, the first ground of that proverb in* Greece 141,142

V

Unregenerate *persons cannot bring forth good fruit* 174,175
Ungodly *persons Reflections* 106
Voluptuous *sinners Reflections* 218
Upright *ones Reflections* 34
Union *with Christ, in eight resemblances* 181,182,283

W

Wages, *what offered by Christ and the world* 28,29
Weak *gifts sanctified, yield strong consolation* 178
Winnowing *of souls by judgment* 166, 167
Worldlings *Reflections* 27,41

BRITISH
23JY73
MUSEUM

FINIS